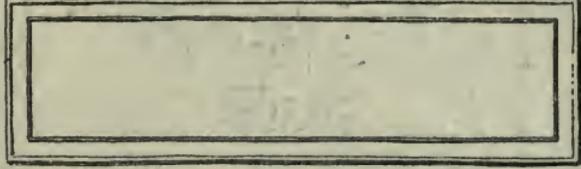
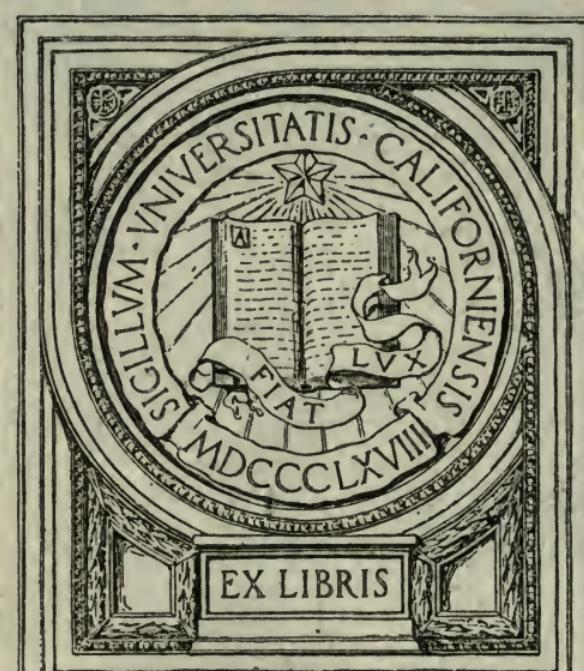
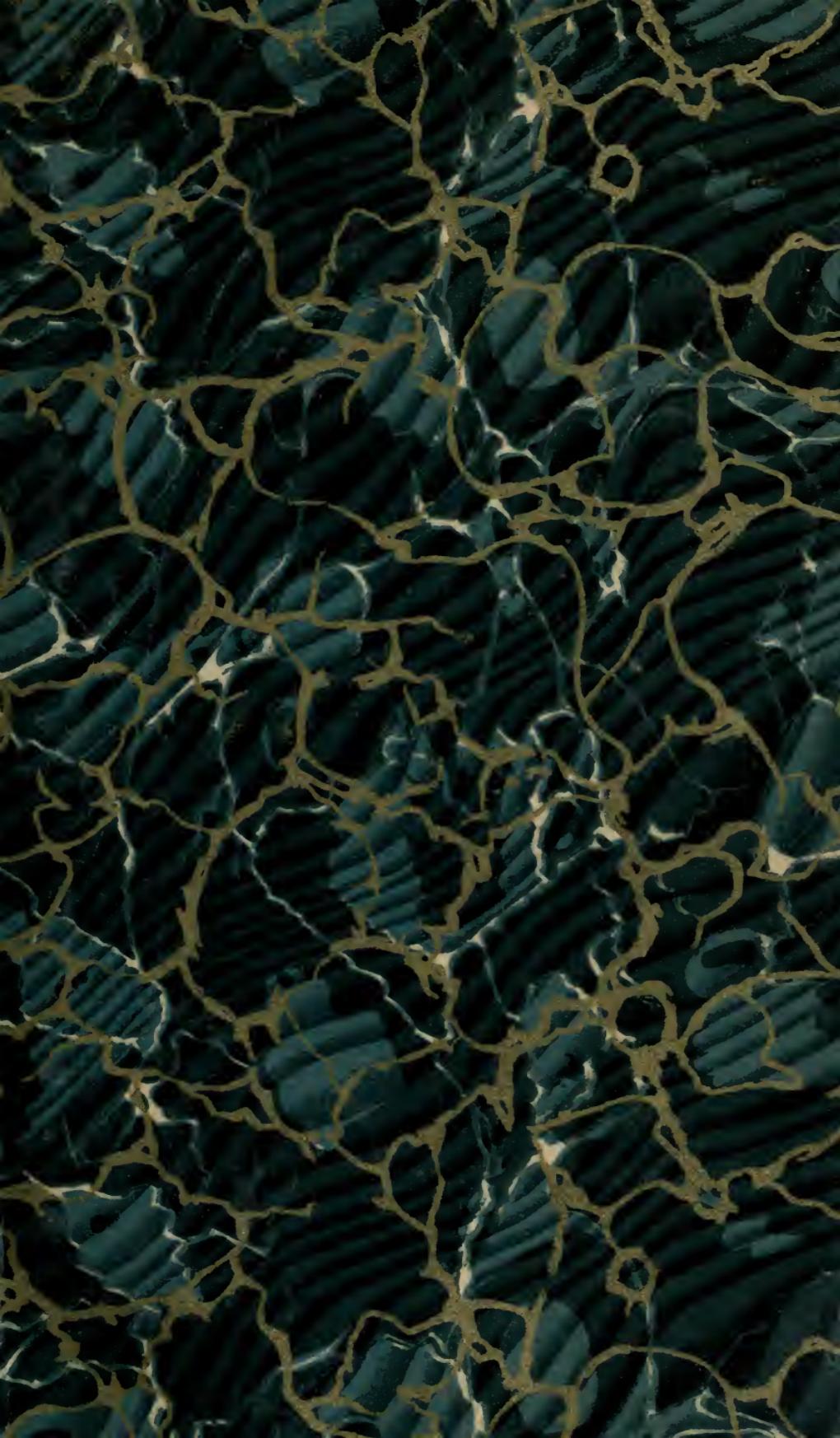


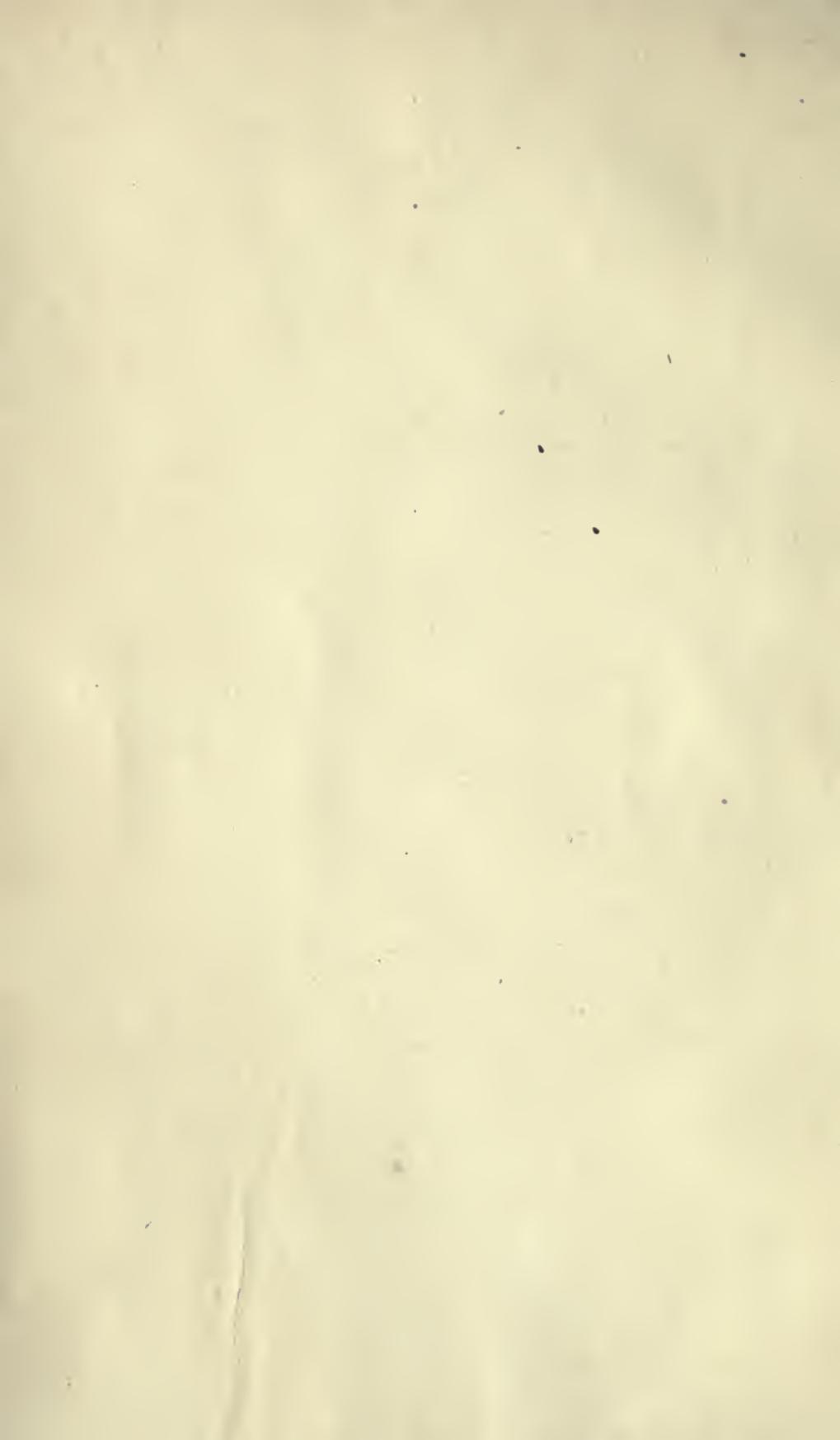
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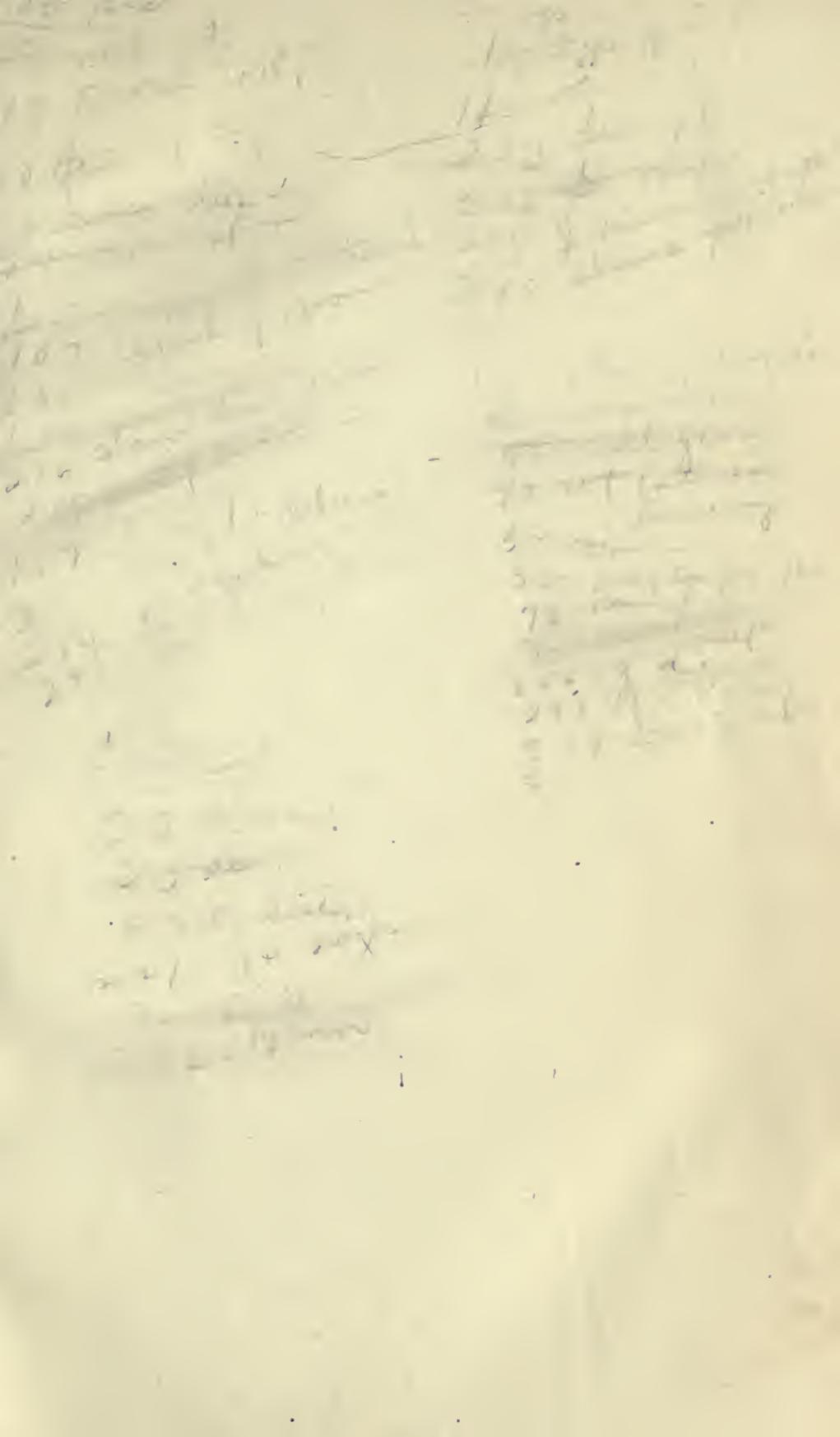


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JOAN OF ARC



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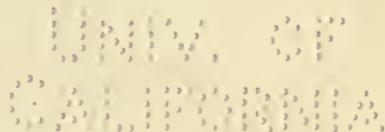
JOAN OF ARC
FROM A MINIATURE IN THE SPETZ COLLECTION

JOAN OF ARC

BY

GRACE JAMES

WITH TWELVE ILLUSTRATIONS



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TO
ELSPETH, MY SISTER

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FRANCE

1429

Showing Extent of
ENGLISH POSSESSIONS

English Possessions



Burgundian

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French

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English Miles

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FRANCE IN 1429

SHewing THE EXTENT OF ENGLISH AND BURGUNDIAN POSSESSIONS

JOAN OF ARC

CHAPTER I

CHARLES VII., HIS MOTHER, HIS WIFE, AND HIS WIFE'S MOTHER

JOAN OF ARC is a character unique in the history of the world. Study is powerless to disperse the mystery that shrouds her inspiration. Familiarity with all the circumstances serves but to increase the wonder of her achievement. In spite of curiosity both legitimate and impertinent, in spite of labour, faithful research, and the imaginative efforts of poets and painters, the Maid keeps her secret yet, and remains elusive, inviolate. This baffling quality, which invites and denies at once, adds a singular attraction to a personality already tender and heroic.

There is a desire to get as near as may be to a true and sympathetic conception of Joan of Arc. What means may be employed to gratify this desire? Some have called modern science to their aid, and used this instrument with the utmost ingenuity. However, it has served them little. Equally unprofitable are the conclusions of others who have treated Joan as an isolated creature, a prodigy, something altogether removed from human experience and practically outside the range of human sympathy. This method has been applied to geniuses of all kinds, and is invariably without value.

It is true of all effective geniuses that they reflect their

JOAN OF ARC

times and also transcend them. To this rule Joan of Arc is no exception. She is for all time, certainly, but she was also essentially the product of her age. There then obtained conditions which made her type possible, there existed circumstances which called aloud for her intervention.

A knowledge of these conditions and circumstances is indispensable to a just appreciation of the Maid's character. The conception of her personality cannot be separated from them, nor they from it. At the same time, owing to the peculiar accidents of her birth and position, and her limited opportunities, with many of them she never came into direct contact.

The curtain is now to be raised upon events of moment. The unhappy state of France must be shown, the figure of Charles the King, those who worked faithfully for his weal, and those who brought about his woe. These things speak of the coming of Joan of Arc, but she herself does not yet hold the stage.

The most casual student of the life of King Charles VII. of France cannot fail to be impressed by a very remarkable factor in the working out of his destiny. This is the feminine influence, both for good and for evil, to which he was subjected throughout his career.

Of course, almost all men are influenced by women. During their early years, life is for them what their mothers make it to be. Later, they have more or less to do with their sisters, their wives, and their mothers-in-law. A body of feminine thought, ideas, sympathies, and instincts mingles with the sum of influences, impulses, and emotions which go to make up a man's existence.

The feminine element in Charles VII.'s history has nothing of this vague and general character. It is strong, constant, peculiarly distinct, and very important, some-

thing almost unique. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that every decisive action undertaken or accomplished by Charles VII. was prompted by a woman. Isabel of Bavaria, his mother; Yolande of Aragon, his mother-in-law; Marie of Anjou, his gentle wife; Joan of Arc, his military leader and his saint; Agnes Sorel, the lady whom he loved—all these had their day of power over him, as well as other women, whose names and reputations are less well known to history. All Charles's efforts and aspirations in the direction of self-respect, strength, sense, sanity, and kingliness were the result of women's labours. Women who loved him, found his better self, protected and upheld his dignity, jealously guarded his honour, set his crown upon his head and his sceptre in his hand, foresaw dangers, and conceived wise policies for him, saved him time and again from ruin. What was there in the King to command all this wealth of patience and of faithfulness? His character, as it has come down to posterity, is by no means delightful. His face was not beautiful, his form was not handsome, and his personality was not engaging. Yet he was so fought for, and worked for, that he is called the Well Served to this day. Incapable and ungrateful, he possessed some quality that held to his cause the best men of his country and time, that appealed to the tenderness and pity, to the everlasting maternal instinct of the good women who knew him.

Even women who were not good, were good to him. His mother, the ill-famed Isabel of Bavaria, was, it seems, kind, careful, as far as in her lay, and not neglectful of her children. During the little Prince's childhood she must have been the most vivid figure upon his horizon, for his father, King Charles VI., was already mad, poor soul, and lived retired, occupied with his sick, wild fancies.

Isabel the Queen, was passionate, luxurious, vain, and

selfish. She was vulgar and unscrupulous ; she recked nothing of her fair fame ; she knew not the meaning of honour. She had no pride and no restraint. Perhaps she worked more havoc in France than any woman before her, or since. She was bad, but for the sake of justice three things must be said for her. She was not all bad, she had not always been bad, and, moreover, she was most unfortunate. Her nature was earthly, not sublime—she could not support adversity. She was both sinned against and sinning.

In 1385 Charles VI. married her for love. At that time he was seventeen years old, and she was two years younger. He was charmed by her portrait, in which she appeared brown-haired, fresh and fair, an innocent princess of fifteen. They brought her from Bavaria to Amiens, where the boy King, full of his youthful ardour, rushed to meet her, and when he saw her, he was more in love than ever. She was the very soul of youth, at once lively and gentle, so winsome and rosy that she looked Cupid's own sister, so simple in her way of life that her ladies were hard put to it for attires to deck her out to meet the eyes of the nobility of France. The two children were married in the Cathedral of Amiens after three days' acquaintance, and the first year or two of their married life passed by as sweetly as a romantic story or a song. Alas, that this pretty beginning should be so soon marred ! The King's love cooled, and he did not hide it. There was an end of his caresses and his protestations. Although she gave him children, Charles neglected his wife. Weak in mind as in body, he led a strenuous life of pleasure. He became wild, restless, and dissipated.

The Queen was patient ; she waited and she hoped against hope, in vain. The King went from bad to worse ; his way of life told upon him severely ; his health broke

down in a fit of violent madness, which recurred in periodic attacks until his death. In his illness he did not know his wife, or he would turn upon her with brutal ferocity, full of outrageous insults for her and for her house. He grew worse; he fell into an absolute neglect of his person, and would allow no one to care for him, or render him ordinary services. He lived and looked like a savage, in an unthinkable condition of dirt and foul disease.

For some time Isabel courageously continued in the fulfilment of her duties towards her husband, but in the end abandoned them and him. The Duke of Orleans, the King's brother—young, gallant, possessed of remarkable beauty and charm—became her evil counsellor and false friend. The Queen's own brother, Louis of Bavaria, a very hateful man, was also much in her company. Her character suffered rapid deterioration. Her avarice, her discontent, her vanity, and her love of pleasure increased astonishingly.

Charles, who was her fifth son, and the eleventh of her twelve children, was born in 1403. During the years that followed his birth she sank low. Her manner of life was not conducive to health or to peace of mind. She aged rapidly, and at five-and-forty was an old and tired woman, disfigured by abnormal stoutness. So great was her infirmity in this respect that she was unable to appear in Council, and eventually came to be wheeled about in a chair made for that purpose. She lived in horrible fear of death, for ever surrounded by doctors, astrologers, and wise women, who accompanied her from place to place, as she travelled, borne in a litter. Riding on horseback, an exercise of which, in her youth, she had been passionately fond, had become impossible. She had the most extraordinary draughts and medicines for the good of her health concocted of gold in liquid form, and precious jewels melted

into elixirs. She kept a number of musicians, fools, and jugglers, and of strange wild animals and pet birds. She presided over a brilliantly extravagant Court. The luxury, the excesses in matters of dress of her maids of honour were a byword. Seeing the distress of France and its deplorable financial condition, they were a crying scandal, and scandalous also was the Queen's conduct as a whole.

Some idea may now be formed of the atmosphere into which little Prince Charles was born. He saw the light in the royal palace of Saint Paul, where his mother's bed was hung with green curtains, as is duly recorded in the royal accounts. Before he had completed his first year, he had his own establishment in the Hotel du Petit Musc, a house of such evil repute that to put a child there was profanation. He had his own suite of male and female attendants and was created Count of Ponthieu, with a seal of his own to seal all acts concerning his affairs.

During his first years his tender eyes beheld such things as, please God, few children see. A mad father, an unworthy mother, a hundred villainous court intrigues, rivalries, and quarrels between great lords, the fury and despair that followed the murder of the Duke of Orleans, the horrors of civil war, the sanguinary risings in Paris, death, conspiracy, and confusion—all these were like horrid phantoms about the Prince's cradle, and whether he was conscious of them or not, they left their mark upon a plastic and not too healthy nature.

For the rest, Isabel seems to have been a kindly mother, as far as in her lay. She saw her children often, and was assiduous in providing for their comfort and their fit maintenance. The royal accounts bear witness to the wages of various nurses and attendants, the purchase of articles of nursery furniture and babies' clothing.

“Sixty-four *sous parisis*” were given for “half-a-dozen

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CHARLES VII, KING OF FRANCE
FROM THE PAINTING BY JEAN FOUCET IN THE LOUVRE

fine cloths delivered to the women of my lord Charles of France (upon the last day of March 1403) to be spread over him when he is given his soup."

" Item : A hat of black velvet, thick pile, for Monsieur de Ponthieu, 10 May 1404, four *livres parisis*."

" Item : Three ells of green cloth to make him a *houppelande*, eight *livres* eight *sous*."

In 1413, my lord of Ponthieu, being now ten years old, made his first appearance in the political arena.

In the early days of December of that year, his mother, Isabel the Queen, was sojourning at her palace the Hotel de Barbette, in Paris. About this time Yolande of Aragon, Queen of Sicily and Duchess of Anjou, left the town of Angers, where she mostly dwelt, and came to Marcoussis, hard by the capital, bringing her children in her hand, and especially her eldest daughter, the Lady Marie of Anjou, which lady was nine years of age.

The two Queen-mothers deliberated much together, and without loss of time completed the negotiations for an alliance between Prince Charles and the little girl Marie. The occasion was marked by compliments and liberalities on the part of the Queen of France towards her distinguished visitors. She presented the Queen of Sicily with six golden goblets, enamelled a light red within. The child, Louis of Anjou, Count of Guise, was with his mother and had a diamond, as also did Marie de Craon, Queen Yolande's beautiful maid of honour. The young Count of Ponthieu received a golden ewer and a cup, but how they pleased him is not recorded.

The betrothal ceremony took place in the King's palace of the Louvre. Charles VI., attacked upon that day with a fearful frenzy, could not be there to see his son contracted to the Princess of Anjou ; but there were present Queen Isabel, the King and Queen of Sicily, Louis the Dauphin,

Duke of Guyenne, Charles, Duke of Orleans, Charles of Artois, Count of Eu, and Bernard VII., Count of Armagnac.

What was done upon that day was nothing very binding. A merely provisional arrangement was made which might be ratified or annulled at will, when the contracting parties should attain their legal majority ; in this case when the man should reach fourteen years of age and the woman twelve. The marriage contract between babies which was drawn up at the Louvre was, of course, a purely political affair. As such, its significance was of the gravest importance.

In 1407, the Duke of Burgundy and the King of Sicily, Duke of Anjou, had made an attempt to patch up the ancient quarrels of their houses and to enter into a mutually profitable alliance. Catherine of Burgundy, a princess of very tender years, was contracted to Louis of Anjou, the eldest son of the King of Sicily. She was conveyed to her future husband's residence that she might early grow to know and to love him, in accordance with one of the few sensible and humane customs that obtained in connexion with medieval marriages of convenience.

However, during the five years or so that followed, the actions of the Duke of Burgundy aroused the suspicions, and finally the deep disapproval of his honest ally. The murder of the Duke of Orleans was the foundation-stone of the barrier that arose between the two princes.

At last (in 1413) the King of Sicily decided to break the contract between his child and the daughter of Burgundy. In the month of November, Catherine was solemnly conducted to Beauvais by the Lord of Loigny, Marshal of France, and an escort of twenty knights. There she was delivered over to her father's lords, who came to meet her, together with her great trousseaux, which she had already received, consisting of clothes, gold

and silver plate, jewels, furniture, church ornaments, tapestries and horses. The proceedings were legal enough. Nevertheless, they constituted a slap in the face which the proud Burgundian could not brook. There was an end of all hope of an understanding between Burgundy and Anjou.

But the Duke of Anjou was in great need of support. His dominions were vast, but scattered ; his difficulties were legion, and his succession very ill-assured. His crying necessity was for a strong ally.

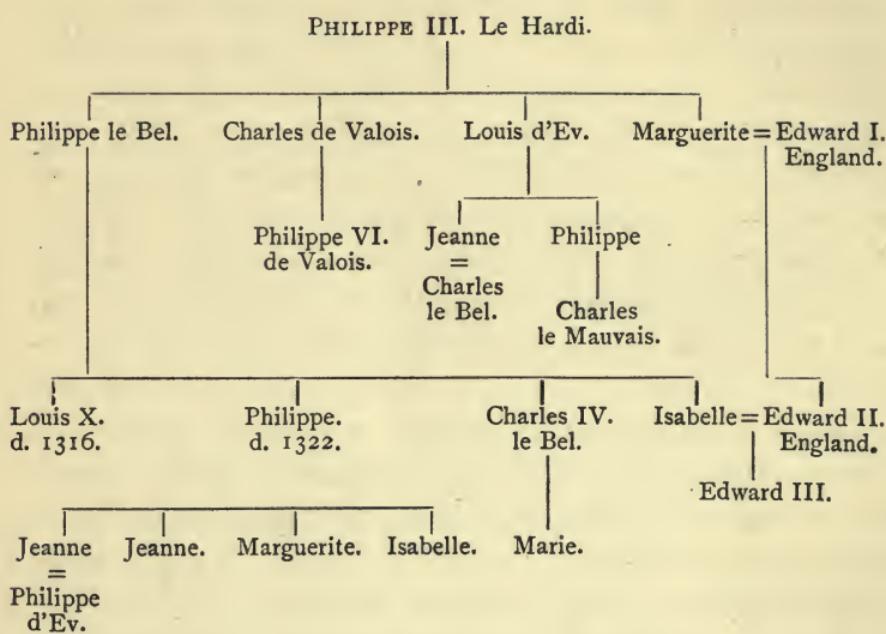
This time his wife took the matter in hand. The new alliance was a woman's affair, conceived and carried out with a strange mixture of statesmanlike foresight and feminine intuition. In course of time it acquired an importance which Yolande may have vaguely contemplated, though she could not have counted upon it. When Marie of Anjou was promised to little Prince Charles, two lives stood between him and the throne. These two lives were swept away, for the times were wild. Yolande thus was to find herself the mother, the guide, the responsible counsellor of the youthful and forlorn King and Queen of France. The fortunes of the House of Anjou and those of the Crown were bound together ; together they must rise and fall. Whether the House of Anjou gained definitely by the alliance is an open question ; the benefits expected to accrue from it were, at least, postponed.

Upon the other hand, Charles began immediately to reap his advantages, for his mother-in-law took him away at once from the pestilential atmosphere of the Court, to keep him near her and to care for him as her own son. A short time they remained in Paris, after which the Queen of Sicily departed from the capital and went southward, with the Count and Countess of Ponthieu and her other children, and came to Angers.

For two years Charles lived in relations of the closest intimacy and tenderest affection with this strong and good woman, with her kind, honest lord, and with their innocent children. He travelled with them through the towns of Anjou and Provence. He shared the play, as well as the knightly education, of the Count of Guise and of his brother *Monsieur René*, at this time beginning, with the latter, what was to be a life-long friendship. Everything that was gay and natural in his childhood, everything that was healthy and of good report, Charles owed to Yolande of Aragon. If he knew what a king and a Frenchman should, she taught it him. If he was ever dignified, gracious, firm, or patriotic (and in flashes he was all of these), she made him so.

Yolande of Aragon was born in 1380, the daughter of John I., King of Aragon, and of his wife Yolande de Bar, a French princess. In 1400 she married, in the town of Arles, Louis II., Duke of Anjou, Count of Provence, King of Naples, Sicily, and Jerusalem. She was young, beautiful, vivacious, and extremely intelligent, but she was fain to call up all her qualities and her courage to aid her in the long and difficult task set her by destiny. She shared her husband's triple crown, and the myriad cares and dangers that accompanied his somewhat barren honours. She helped him to administer his scattered dominions, levied aids and equipped armies for him. At his early death she was left sole guardian and defender of his young children, and regent of his estates. An enormous burden of work and responsibility was thus laid upon her shoulders ; her daughter's marriage added to this burden the dead weight of the misfortunes of France. In the accomplishment of her difficult duties Yolande never faltered. Uninfluenced by an atmosphere of time-serving and pleasure-seeking, treachery, interest, despair, and the fatal

THE HISTORY
OF THE HOUSE OF VALOIS



policy of *laisser-aller*, she preserved sense, faithfulness, and loyalty, keeping her head clear and her heart pure, living as a brave, capable, loving woman, a mother and a Queen.

Prince Charles spent the best part of two years at his "good mother's" side. It was the last peace he was to know for many a long day, for during that time his two elder brothers died, and he was left heir to the crown of France, Isabel of Bavaria being Regent, for the King grew more and more crazed. Growing dissension within, and repeated attack from without, tore and battered the unhappy realm. Treacheries and intrigues aggravated its condition. Its troubles, growing more and more acute, resulted in anarchy and confusion.

The situation had its root in a past century. It was the outcome of the rivalry between the nations of England and France, which had existed, in a more or less marked degree, since the period of the Norman Conquest. As a result of this event, the King of France became possessed of a much too powerful vassal. That the Duke of Normandy should be King of England suited him very ill; for the safety of France the two titles must be divided. A succession of French kings adopted an offensive policy towards England, the object of which was to oust the English from their French dominions. This policy was pursued with varying results through the reigns of Philip I., Louis VI., Louis VII., Philip Augustus, and Louis VIII. in France, and William I., Henry I., Henry II., Richard Cœur-de-Lion, and John in England. Peace was made in 1259 between Henry III. and Louis IX.

The peace was not lasting. Again, under Edward I. and Philip the Fair, the two countries were at each other's throats, and affairs were only patched up in 1303 by a treaty which proved most disastrous in the light of after events. By one of the clauses of this treaty, Edward's

son (Edward II.) took to wife the daughter of Philip the Fair. Here was sown the potential seed of the Hundred Years' War.

Edward III. claimed the kingdom of France by right of succession through his mother Isabella, and his grandfather Philip the Fair, thus lending an entirely new aspect to the long-standing rivalry between England and that country. He definitely adopted the offensive policy of the would-be conqueror.

The Hundred Years' War falls into two periods. The first comprises the famous English victory of Crécy (1346), the capture of Calais (1347), the victory of Poitiers (1356), and is brought to a close by the Treaty of Bretigny (1360), which saved the crown of France, at the price of half the kingdom left in the King of England's hands.

During the breathing-space which followed the signing of the treaty, each country was fully occupied with disturbing domestic affairs. In England, after the death of Edward III., there followed the minority of Richard II., with the vicissitudes of the regency of the King's uncles, the rebellion of Wat Tyler, Richard II.'s unfortunate reign and deposition, and the Lancastrian usurpation. After this Henry IV. remained at home, having his hands overfull as it was.

In France, Charles V. ruled wisely, and by his untiring efforts raised the country somewhat from the slough of despond into which it had fallen. But with the minority of his son Charles VI., back it fell, miserably. This King also was cursed with ambitious and quarrelsome uncles. To the natural helplessness of his youth there soon succeeded the deplorable helplessness of his infirmity. He was mad. Conflicting powers became rife and unrestrained. The country was divided by civil war.

At length the Duke of Burgundy murdered the Duke of

Orleans (1407), and was, for a time, with his party, paramount in the capital. He was put down by the avengers of Orleans, under the leadership of Bernard, Count of Armagnac, and the two factions continued their bitter and incessant feud.

England, of course, had the choice of an alliance with either side, and enjoyed the advantage of being able to play one party off against the other. Such had been the comparatively peaceful policy of Henry IV. Henry V., after a careful survey of the situation (which included its ecclesiastical aspect, for the Armagnacs and the Burgundians were at variance upon the question of the Papal Schism), became moved by powerful feelings of a religious and patriotic character, claimed the kingdom of France, accepted the alliance of Burgundy, declared war against the Armagnac party, and set forth to reopen hostilities in person, with the arms of his two kingdoms duly emblazoned upon his shield.

In 1415 he took Harfleur, and won the battle of Agincourt. In 1417 and 1418 he conducted a victorious campaign in Normandy, subjugating the whole of the province, with Rouen, its chief town. The Duke of Burgundy regained Paris, and thrust out the Armagnacs, even as he had been by them thrust out. He gained custody of the person of the mad King, and Isabel made common cause with him. Paris was the scene of revolts and riots, street skirmishes by day, and alarms by night, barricades were raised in the streets and the gutters ran blood.

As heir to the throne of France, the Dauphin Charles was in residence in Paris. He lodged at the Hotel-Neuf des Tournelles, and almost lost his life there on the night of the great Burgundian attack upon the city. Charles was the hope of the Armagnacs, a necessity to their cause; and John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy, was not one to

stick at the murder of a prince of the blood, as had been amply proved by the event.

It was dark night, the streets were full of fighting and confusion. People cried, "Peace! peace! Long live the King and the Duke of Burgundy!" Quiet citizens and women put out their lights and barred their doors and covered their children's heads, that they should not hear the hideous noises without. Burgundy's men and the mob warmed to their work; they became more and more menacing.

Tanguy Duchatel, the Provost of Paris, who was on the Armagnac side, went hurriedly and secretly to the Hotel-Neuf des Tournelles, and found the Dauphin asleep upon his pillow. Tanguy Duchatel snatched the boy up in his arms, only pausing to wrap a cloak about him, and swiftly bore him out of the house by a side door. He was followed by a handful of the Prince's attendants. They crossed the palace gardens and came to a postern gate. Robert le Maçon, the Dauphin's Chancellor, was the only member of the party provided with a horse which, at the risk of his life, he gave up to his master. The Provost of Paris mounted and rode away, holding the young Prince before him on the saddle. They gained in safety the fortress of the Bastille, the Dauphin half dead with terror. After some days Tanguy Duchatel brought him to Charenton-sur-Seine, then to Corbeil and to Melun, from thence to Montargis, and finally to Bourges in the Loire country. He did not see Paris for eighteen years, and he would never again live there, so much did he connect the capital with treachery, horror, and bloodshed. The fearful impression made by the Burgundian invasion left its mark upon him for ever.

He now contracted that very curious habit of travel which remained with him throughout his life. He moved

continually from place to place in the neighbourhood of the Loire. It was his pleasure to hide himself in obscure castles and manors, to disappear and reappear without warning. So fully did he gratify his tastes in this direction that more than once the rumour went forth that he was dead and buried. He had to be searched for and discovered in hot haste, that the people's anxiety might be quieted.

The Dauphine, Marie of Anjou, having independently escaped from Paris, and the clutches of the Burgundians, joined her prospective husband, and the two of them, with the good Queen of Sicily, spent above a year propitiating the people of the Loire country, and inciting them to loyalty, endeavouring to draw together some remnants of a heritage, to gain advantageous alliances, to form some practical and coherent policy.

Yolande the Queen, worked hard for her son-in-law, and at length there appeared to be a fair prospect of satisfactory accommodation. The capitulation of Rouen gave pause to all sorts of people. A cry for peace and a period to misery arose through the length and breadth of the country, and to that cry, for once, the great leaders were inclined to lend their ears. The Duke of Burgundy possessed supreme power; the King, the Queen, and the capital were all in his hand, he wanted no better. The Dauphin was more than willing to make peace with him. The Dauphin had no personal feeling of hatred towards the Duke of Burgundy, as heir to the throne he had every reason to desire a good understanding with his greatest vassal, to be; the royal power of France, reunited and backed by the men and money of Burgundy, this would at once change the complexion of the audacious pretensions of that militant monarch, Henry V. France might yet be victoriously lifted out of the mire. So thought

Yolande of Aragon, and, with her, all true lovers of the Dauphin and of France. Their policy had one weak spot. It made no provision for the chiefs of the Armagnac party ; they must necessarily go under. Accordingly they had a secret policy of their own and a plot, and they took steps to insure its success. In so doing they worked unspeakable woe to their country, and to Charles their Prince.

On the 30th of June 1419, Yolande of Aragon was called away to Provence on urgent private affairs. Her going deprived her son-in-law of his only safe counsel and reliable support. Her absence was marked by the most lamentable event of the century.

Charles and the Duke of Burgundy, after a series of unsatisfactory negotiations, agreed to a personal interview at Montereau, to be held upon the 10th of September 1419, upon the fortified bridge, built over the Seine at that place. John the Fearless, going to keep his tryst at Montereau, went to meet his death : for upon that fatal bridge he was foully and treacherously murdered. Then, indeed, was avenged the blood of Louis, Duke of Orleans —but at what a cost ! There was broken every rule of chivalrous warfare. Faith and honour were thrown away, the given word of royalty was made a mockery and its authority openly flouted. Fury was let loose in Paris, the dogs of war were unchained. Philip, son of John the Fearless, given a just cause of quarrel, cried aloud for vengeance on his father's murderers, and was precipitated into the arms of the English, who were only too glad to receive him. All hope of peace was dashed to the ground. A new period of bloodshed, crime, and disaster was inaugurated in the unhappy kingdom of France.

On whom rests the onus of the deed done at Montereau ? Certainly not upon the poor, helpless piece of royalty that was nominally held responsible. The Dauphin was, at this

time, a boy of sixteen, and young for his age. He was gentle and sweet-tempered, impressionable, but listless, delicate in health and undeveloped in mind and body. His temperament was passive, and he had no valorous love of battle, such as was possessed in the fifteenth century by youths even younger than he. His counsellors took the utmost advantage of his naturally retiring and childish qualities and used him as their instrument, keeping him in a condition of ignorance and subservience the while.

The Prince had good counsellors and bad. As has been seen, his best adviser was not with him at Montereau; but he had Gerard Machet, his confessor, a venerable and holy man; he had Barbazan, the great soldier, who was, like Bayard, without fear and without reproach. He had Robert le Maçon, harmless but weak; Jean Louvet, selfish, vain, mean-spirited, and unscrupulous. He had Huges de Noyers and Pierre de Beauvau, gentlemen of his household; he had several soldiers and swordsmen, amongst them Pierre Frotier, a perfect type of the soldier of fortune, who would stick at nothing. Above all, he had Tanguy Duchatel, a man great in his way, loyal and courageous, but a violent partisan of the Armagnac cause, and Burgundy's most inveterate enemy. "Tauneguy . . .," writes a chronicler of his time, "a very perilous man, hot, sudden, and hasty, and what he wishes he must have at once done and accomplished." Such were the diverse personalities that surrounded and influenced the young Prince upon the day of Montereau. Some of them were weak, some lawless, and some nourished an ardent and mortal personal hatred of John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy.

On Sunday, 10 September 1419, the Duke of Burgundy came to Montereau, where his cousin and Prince awaited him. He was invited to lodge in the fortified castle of the place, whilst the Dauphin was established in the town.

The bridge was specially prepared for the interview. It was partitioned into three, with light wooden barricades. The first division opened on to the castle side of the river and formed a species of antechamber ; it led into the second or centre chamber by a door furnished with a lock and key. The third division was the counterpart of the first, except that it opened on to the town side of the river.

These elaborate preparations, which were undertaken entirely by the Dauphin's followers, were not without their meaning. They were, outwardly, measures of extreme precaution, carried out only to ensure the privacy and safety of the great ones who were to meet at Montereau, made in a spirit of punctilious chivalry, in order to conform to the strict ceremony required upon an occasion such as that which was toward. In reality, they increased the dangers of the situation tenfold. In this restricted place, cut off from the outside world, possessing neither the security of the open country nor that of a palace or castle where the laws of hospitality held good, more than a score of proud, hot-headed men were to be cooped up in order to discuss their bitter quarrels. The Duke of Burgundy's star was on the wane, that let him run into such a trap and kept his eyes shut to the ominous treacheries and disaffections that lurked within his own household.

Each prince was to bring, with him, to the interview, ten knights, chosen by himself, but approved by the other side. The Count of Clermont, the Lord of Navailles, the Lords of Saint-Georges, of Vergy, of Autrey, of Lens, of Montaigu, of Fribourg, of Pontaillier, and Pierre de Giac stood for Burgundy. The Dauphin selected Tanguy Duchatel, Barbazan, Pierre Frotier, the Viscount of Narbonne, Pierre de Beauvau, and four other men of name.

Amongst the people of my Lord of Burgundy there was a Jew, named Maître Mousque, who had second-sight, and



JOHN THE FEARLESS, DUC DE BOURGOGNE
FROM THE PAINTING (EARLY BOURGOGNE SCHOOL) IN THE LOUVRE

ED. VENUE
CIRCUS

could tell fortunes. He besought the Duke not to go to the meeting. "My lord, my lord," he cried; "you may go, but you may not return."

Arrived at Montereau, the Duke had sinister news and the air rang heavy with doubt and foreboding. There were those who said that the arrangements upon the bridge were all to the Dauphin's advantage, that the houses hard by in the town sheltered armed men in hiding, that it was not safe or advisable for the Duke to stir forth on that day. The Duke was very thoughtful, nevertheless he rode out at the appointed hour. When he came to the bridge head, he paused and took counsel for the last time without dismounting from his horse. A moment afterwards he was on the bridge. Tanguy Duchatel received him and his company with marks of the greatest respect, but hurried them, through the antechamber, into the centre room where the Dauphin was. Seguinat, the Duke's secretary, lingered for an instant. Tanguy drew him in quickly by the long sleeve of his gown. The door was fast shut behind them. They were cut off from retreat.

Thus far, the record of events is clear enough, but after this point chroniclers are in the wildest disagreement as to what occurred. The witnesses, who were later questioned upon the subject, confused by the violent tumult of the scene, influenced by their party feelings, or by their own equivocable positions, produced varying, blurred, and unsatisfactory depositions. A gloomy twilight persists, enveloping the whole affair. From what can be pieced together it seems that the incidents of the tragedy followed one another, something after this manner.

The Dauphin, in white armour and girt with his sword, stood at the end of the room nearest the town. The Duke went to him, bareheaded, put his knee to the ground, and said: "My lord, after God, my duty is to you. I am bound

to serve and obey you. For this I offer my body, my men, and my friends. Do I say well ? ”

Charles answered : “ Fair cousin, you could say no better. Rise and cover.”

After these courtesies, those that stood by the Prince questioned the Duke. Tanguy Duchatel spoke the first, demanding explanations regarding the death of the Duke of Orleans, accusing his murderer, and announcing that the day of expiation was at hand. The Duke was further charged with usurpation of the royal power, seduction of towns and peoples, alliance with the King’s enemies, connivance at the invasion of France by the English, and other crimes and treasonable acts. He was called to account, and bidden to answer for his deeds. Burgundy made reply, casting away his submissive mask :

“ Nothing can be done or settled except in the presence of the King your father, *before which you must come.*”

“ I shall go before my lord father when it seems good to me,” said Charles, “ and not at the summons of the Duke of Burgundy.”

As these and other words passed, the talk grew more and more heated.

“ In thus doing,” cried the Dauphin, “ you have failed in your duty.”

“ My lord,” said the Duke, “ I have only done what I ought.”

“ You have done wrong,” said the Dauphin.

“ No ! ” said the Duke, speaking unlawfully ; for he, a vassal, gave the lie to the son of his King.

Then the Lord of Navailles took the word. Going up to the Dauphin, “ My lord,” he said, “ you will come presently to your father. . . .” When he said this, he made to seize Charles with his left hand, and with his right he drew his sword half out of the scabbard. It was

enough. In a moment the chamber on the bridge was full of naked swords, and struggling men, and the clashing noises of combat. The Dauphin, terrified half out of his wits, fled away to his quarters in the town, and some of his people followed him. In the sudden danger, the confined space, and the fierce *mélée*, they yielded to panic, who should have defended their master. Only the Lord of Navailles fought for the Duke. The two of them fell mortally wounded, and after a few moments Burgundy stretched his limbs, drew a sighing breath, and so died. His head and body were covered with hideous wounds and gashes, for he was set upon by many at once. Some say that Tanguy Duchatel's was the hand that dealt the Duke his death-blow. He himself always denied it, and according to one account, when Navailles threatened the Dauphin, Tanguy took his master in his arms (as he had done upon a former occasion) and bore him away from the bridge to a place of safety. If this was so, the murder was done in his absence. The brave Barbazan had no cognizance of the affair till he met one flying from the bridge with news. Full of indignation he went to the Dauphin, and warned him that by this deed the crown of France had been placed in jeopardy.

Of peace or respite for France there could be no more thought. Philip, son of John the Fearless, renewed the Anglo-Burgundian Alliance. In 1420 was signed the Treaty of Troyes, by which King Henry V. was to marry Catherine, a daughter of France, their heirs to succeed to the kingdom after the death of Charles VI.

The Dauphin Charles journeyed back to the retreat of his beloved castles on the Loire, and employed himself in those regions as best he might until such time as the death of two kings brought about a further rearrangement of the political situation. Thanks to Montereau and what had .

followed, his outlook upon the future was as black as it could well be. It is possible, however, that national affairs did not weigh too heavily upon him.

In December 1419 Charles started upon a journey through Languedoc, the object of which is not very clear ; probably it partook of the nature of a royal progress, and was intended to impress the people of that district. He visited a host of places, amongst which were the important towns of Lyons and Toulouse. The Lady Marie of Anjou did not accompany him, but he travelled in great state nevertheless, with a considerable escort of troops, to a large extent composed of Scotch men-at-arms and archers.

Borne after the Dauphin was his very splendid armour, which shone with gold and silver and was ornamented with the fine work of the goldsmith. He had a rich sword, jewelled at the hilt, a headpiece surmounted with a crown, very richly jewelled and plumed. As a rule he rode with his face uncovered, wearing a hat of velvet, or of jewelled felt. Under his cuirass, or more often instead of it, he had a tunic made to look high in the shoulders and full across the chest, and called a *huque*. His colours were red, white, and blue, or green.

Charles's clothes were made in the height of the extravagant fashion of his times. His *huques* were covered with gold and embroidery, one of them had long hanging sleeves, cut in scollops and adorned with a great weight of gold. Another was of scarlet velvet and black, sewn with gold thread ; another was of scarlet and gold brocade. The most splendid of all was a *huque* made after the Italian manner, of fine black cloth embroidered in gold, "which embroidery was in the form or manner of a tent traversed by the rays of a golden sun." The golden sun was the Dauphin's chosen device, and his symbolic robe seems to have been intended to convey to all who saw it the idea

of the wearer as both a shelter and a beneficent sun for the kingdom and the people.

In 1422 the Dauphin celebrated his definitive nuptials with Princess Marie of Anjou, to whom he had been betrothed for so many years. The ceremony took place at Bourges, and was of sufficient magnificence in spite of the fact that the royal coffers were already pitifully depleted. The furnishers of Prince Charles's household refused to supply him without immediate payment, and he was obliged to have recourse to the Chapter of Bourges Cathedral, which made him advances in kind, that he might be able to feed his Court and his followers. He was forced also to alienate portions of the royal demesne. For the occasion of his marriage feast Charles borrowed from his cousin, the Duke of Orleans, the famous tapestries of Blois. A lady who was present records that there was a great and splendid gathering of royalty and nobility upon that day. At dinner-time the ladies sat down alone, according to ancient custom, at various tables, the chief of which was presided over by the young Dauphine. During the banquet the bridegroom entered their bower and spoke with each and all of them, showing a very pleasant courtesy.

A few days after this the tapestries of Blois, cloth of gold and green, sown with golden thorns, were hung for another wedding. John of Orleans, half brother of Duke Charles, who afterwards became famous as Dunois, the great soldier, took to wife Marie, daughter of the Dauphin's minister Louvet.

In August 1422 died King Henry V., and in October of the same year King Charles VI. followed him to the grave. King Henry VI. of England and France, a puny infant, was crowned with his mother's bracelet. The Duke of Bedford was appointed his regent in the realm of France.

The Dauphin Charles, for his part, also took the title

of King of France, and styled himself King Charles, VIIth of that name, in his castle of Mehun-sur-Yèvre, on the 30th October 1422. Two days later he came to the great cathedral at Bourges, there to celebrate the feast of All Saints in kingly fashion, and thus began his reign. He had but a little kingdom, and was fain to make the town of Bourges his capital, for Paris was in the hands of his enemies, and Rheims also, where the kings of France were wont to be crowned and anointed. Berry, the Province of Orleans, Touraine, Poitou, Maine, Anjou, Dauphiné, the Province of Lyons, Languedoc, Auvergne, the town of La Rochelle and Provence—these provinces alone recognised him. He was scornfully dubbed the King of Bourges.

The English had dominion over all French territory north of the Loire, with the exception of certain constantly disputed places. Burgundy and Flanders were their friendly countries, and in Brittany they would, at least, meet with no harm. However, the English soldier genius, Henry V., was dead and his successor was a crying child. The hope of France was a young man grown, almost twenty years of age. Lovers of their country looked to him, and their hearts beat high with expectation. They were doomed to disappointment. Charles made no change in his way of life. Still his obscure and aimless journeys from castle to castle, still his listlessness and inertia, his lack of energy, passion, and decision, his heart-breaking indifference, caused his people to despair. He let slip precious months, during which the English had to deal with a critical situation and a change of government—months which were his Heaven-sent opportunity, when bold action might have served him much.

In the summer of 1423, Yolande the Fair and Wise returned to her place beside the King of France. What

she could, she did for him ; but, alas, it was late to do much. She watched over the birth of his first child, a son, whom they called Louis. A month or two later she discovered that Suffolk, the great English soldier, with three thousand men at his back, was come to conduct warlike operations at Segre in Anjou. She took prompt action, and sent against him the Count of Aumale and Ambroise de Loré, who gained the considerable victory of Gravelle.

André de Laval won his spurs at Gravelle. He was but twelve years old at that time, a valiant child, the grandson of the great Bertrand du Guesclin. He wore the brave Constable's own sword at the battle. His grandmother girded him with it, and said, "God make thee as valiant as he whose this sword was."

The poor King of Bourges had but short joy of his victory. In 1424 was fought the battle of Verneuil, which proved a second Agincourt. The Duke of Bedford, regent for King Henry VI., led the English army, which was in perfect condition, well trained, excellently disciplined. Bedford was a soldier, in strength, valour, and judgment only second to his brother of glorious memory. He marched in the van of his host, a cloak of blue velvet half covered his armour. He wore upon his breast the white cross of France ; over it, but smaller, was the red cross of England. He had his own banner, and four others were borne before him ; on two were the arms of England, and on two were the arms of France, very plain for all to see. With him fought the great captains of England—Suffolk, Warwick, Salisbury, Scales, and Talbot.

Upon the other side was all the fair chivalry of France, and with them many a noble Scot and many a dashing soldier of fortune. There were Douglas and Buchan, the Duke of Alençon, the Counts of Aumale, Tonnerre, and

Ventadour, the Lords of Narbonne and La Fayette, La Hire and Poton de Xaintrailles.

The armies were great. They met face to face in the open. The fighting was fierce and bloody, and the field was strewn with dead. The English had yet another victory to their list, and Charles VII. lost more than nine thousand fighters, so the heralds found it. Here died Buchan, Constable of France ; Archibald Douglas, Duke of Touraine ; James, his son ; the Counts of Aumale, of Tonnerre, of Ventadour ; William of Narbonne, the last of his race. The Duke of Alençon was taken prisoner ; he was very young, and but newly wed to a Princess of Orleans. It was a heavy day for France.

The Duke of Bedford, having obtained the victory, "gathered his Princes about him, and in great humility returned thanks to his Creator, with hands clasped and eyes raised to Heaven, for the good fortune that He had sent him. After this the dead were stripped of any garments of value that they had."

Now followed five of the blackest years that France had ever seen. The star of the English increased daily. They won battles, and cities, and men ; their good fortune never deserted them, their audacity grew greater and greater, for their wildest ventures prospered. Their prestige was overwhelming, they brought terror wherever they went ; the French soldiers would not stand up against them.

Charles apparently gave up all attempt to assert himself. From Amboise to Chinon, from Chinon to Bourges, from Bourges to Poitiers he went—God knows with what reason or unreason—and allowed the administration of the nation and the whole tissue of his majesty to go to rack and ruin. The condition of affairs at Court, the lamentable confusion, indifference, and absolute stress of poverty is barely conceivable. Royal appointments stood empty, for

the King had no money with which to pay his officers. Records were not kept, the official chronicle of the kingdom was not written. The machinery of State was completely disorganised. The King dwelt in retirement, surrounding himself with favourites and flatterers, and living, as far as he was able, in a fool's paradise, or in a most unduly prolonged childhood. His treasury was empty. Something of the irony of the spectacle of a pauper prince seems to have tickled the popular fancy, and all sorts of stories were told touching the royal destitution. True or false, they serve to show which way the wind blew. It is said that the shoemaker was summoned to Court with a pair of boots for his Majesty. One boot was already upon the royal leg, when the cobbler, learning that Charles was not able to pay him ready-money for his goods, hastily pulled it off and bore the pair away without more parley. Upon this the King's enemies made a song and sang it scornfully. And the song began thus :—

“ Quand le roy s'en vint en France
 Il fit oindre ses houssaulx,
 Et la royne lui demande :
 ‘ Ou veut aller ce damoisaulx ? ’ ”

Martial d'Auvergne, in his rhymed chronicle, describes an incident at Court :—

“ Un jour que La Hire et Poton
 Le vindrent voir par festoient,
 N'avoient qu'une queue de mouton
 Et deux poulets tout seulement.”

Which was, perhaps, enough for the three of them, but certainly was no feast.

In the midst of all this misery, Charles's wife and his good mother-in-law did not lose heart or give up action. The Queen of Sicily, with her sound sense, saw clearly one of the chief causes of Charles's misfortunes. She looked

with a disapproving eye upon the King's circle of evil councillors, false friends, and favourites. She determined to cure him if she could of his fatal weakness for parasites, a weakness deadly for the development of his own character and for the welfare of his people. Opportunity served her. Count Arthur of Richmont, brother of the Duke of Brittany, had hitherto fought upon the English side. He had, however, lately received a rebuff from the Duke of Bedford touching a military post which he had coveted. He retired to his lands, humiliated and filled with a burning resentment. In this mood, Yolande caught him, and, with her daughter, the young Queen of France, entered into a series of negotiations with the Count, who, in the end, threw in his lot with the French party, and received the sword of the Constable of France.

Here, at least, was a strong personality gained to Charles's cause. The Count possessed no brilliance or charm, but he was a person of judgment, a tenacious thinker and fighter. He at once declared war upon the King's favourites, and made it a condition of his alliance that all the lot of them should be banished.

Tanguy Duchatel, with characteristic generosity, resigned his position at Court and retired to Beaucaire, in Provence; for he said he would never stand in the way of his lord's advancement. Frotier, the soldier of fortune, took himself off for a consideration, as did Jean Cadart, a doctor of medicine whose learning the King had admired. The Constable, with astonishing energy, rid Charles of Louvet, Pierre de Giac, and Jean Vernet, called le Camus de Beau-lieu. Charles VII. was furious at this interference with his private affairs, but he was powerless to curb the activities of the turbulent Constable whose alliance was of great value.

Just when he had effected a general clearance, and had

arrived at a point when he might hope to do some good, Richmont committed a most exasperating error. He gave, to the King, Georges de la Tremouille for friend and adviser.

La Tremouille was diabolically clever, unscrupulous, ambitious, self-seeking. He had great riches, great influence, lands, and friends. He was a hundred times more dangerous than Louvet had been, or Giac. He gained complete ascendancy over the spirit of the King. For six years he held power and governed in France, during which time he never did any good, but only evil. He soon broke with the Constable, and turned the King against him. The bitterness and dangerous inconvenience of a violent private quarrel between two great lords was added to the country's misfortunes. There was a lesser civil war within the greater.

La Tremouille, Charles's evil genius, succeeded in neutralizing the good influence of the Queen of Sicily, who was almost at her wits' end. All this time the English never ceased their activities; their power and dominion grew steadily. Bold and triumphant, they came at last to besiege the city of Orleans, Charles VII.'s last great stronghold. By the beginning of 1429, the citizens were in dire straits and the nation's fate hung trembling in the balance. But little recked the King. La Hire rode in hot haste to acquaint him of reverses at Orleans, and found him gaily rehearsing a ballet.

It seemed that France and the House of Valois were doomed to fall together.

Then Joan of Arc came out of Domrémy and journeyed to the King at Chinon.

CHAPTER II

JOAN'S CHILDHOOD

very
A
MERLIN the warlock prophesied : " That a wonderful Maid should come from the region of the Oak Wood for the healing of nations."

When the mad King Charles VI. sat upon the throne of France, under subjection to Isabel his evil wife, a woman came to him from the South, Marie d'Avignon, who had suffered many things in a dream. She told how in her visions she had beheld arms and armour, but she knew that these were not for her, but for a Maid yet unborn who should come to restore France. Now these sayings were known far and wide throughout the land, and many gave credence to them. And the Oak Wood was the *Bois Chesnu* on the Marches of Loraine, or so it was said, and in that region, therefore, the rumour ran about more and more " that France, ruined by a woman, is to be saved by a Maid who shall come from the Marches of Loraine. The forest called *Bois Chesnu* was hard by Domrémy, and a bare half league from a house there, where Joan of Arc was born.

She was born in the year of our Lord 1412 (but some say that it was a year, or two years earlier), on or about the feast of the Epiphany, at which time devout men call to mind with joy the acts and life of our Saviour Christ. It is written (by Percival de Boulainvilliers in a letter to the Duke of Milan) that upon this night the peasants of Domrémy were moved with a strange and powerful feeling of gladness, and, knowing nothing about the birth of the

CALIFORNIA



THE HOUSE OF JOAN OF ARC AT DOMRENY



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Maid, they ran up and down in the darkness as though beside themselves, to find out what new and marvellous thing had come to pass. The cocks of the village, heralds of the new birth, broke out earlier and more loudly than they were wont, crowing and flapping their wings. For two hours they thus seemed to foretell the event. A fifteenth-century poet imagines the night full of signs and portents, after the manner of the ancient world, and thus tells of the prodigies that came to pass about the cradle of the Maid. "The thunder sounded, the sea trembled, and the earth shook, the sky lightened, the worlds gave signs of joy. Exaltation, mingled with terror, filled the people. They sang sweet songs and danced in rhythmic figures, in token of the salvation promised to their race by this celestial birth."

The Maid grew and flourished, and still her pure childhood was marked with wonders. Heaven took so great a delight in her, that all who shared her innocent rest, under her father's roof, had nothing to fear from the fraud and malice of men. When she was seven years old she tended her father's flock in the pasture lands, and the wolves did not assail her sheep, but the little wild birds of the woods came at her call, and would eat bread out of her hand. She was so dear to the saints that evil could not come near her, and there was a virtue in her that drove away every unclean thing, but all that was gracious and lovely flourished in her presence.

"When Joan was in her thirteenth year," says Messire Percival de Boulanvilliers (in the letter already quoted), "she and other girls were watching the sheep in the common meadow, and they ran a foot-race for a prize of flowers, or some other guerdon. Joan won with very great ease; she ran so fleetly indeed that it seemed to some who were there, that her feet did not touch the ground. One of the

girls cried out, ‘Joan, I see you flying close to the earth !’ When the race was over and Joan, at the limit of the meadow, was, as it were, rapt and distraught (*rapta et a sensibus alienata*), resting and recovering herself, there was near her a youth, who said, ‘Joan, go home, for your mother says [she needs you.]’ She believed it to be her brother, or else some other youth of her village, and so went home as quickly as might be. But her mother was displeased with her, and said, ‘Child, why have you left your sheep ?’ And the Maid asked, ‘Did you not send for me ?’ But her mother said, ‘No.’ Now the Maid supposed that one of her companions had deceived her in sport, and therefore she made to return straightway to the meadow from whence she had come. But suddenly she beheld a bright cloud, and from the cloud a voice spoke to her and bade her ‘change her way of life and do marvellous deeds, for the King of Heaven had chosen her to aid the King of France. She must wear man’s dress and take up arms, be a captain in the war, and all would be done by her advice.’”

Now Joan was troubled at this saying, for she was but a child, and well she knew that she could neither fight nor ride ; moreover, she was afraid. But when she was alone in the fields holy St. Michael, who is the Warrior of Heaven, came to her in glorious guise, and gave her counsel concerning these things. And the Maid grew strong and daring, and she caught the young wild colts in the meadows and rode, and so learnt a wonderful horsemanship.

These are gracious legends which became current early in the career of the wonderful Maid. About the time of the coronation of the Dauphin Charles VII. at Rheims, that is, July 1429, they were in every mouth, they stirred every heart that was loyal to France, they were repeated continually with wonder and with tears. It is unnecessary

here to discuss the precise amount of intrinsic truth contained in these legends, to determine how far they are founded upon actual facts, or to discover how natural and everyday incidents have been pressed to furnish their marvellous details. They have another value, which is twofold. In the first place, they are signs of the times, the expression of a popular imagination, and of a popular belief, which are curiously remote, and yet in a manner curiously related to the popular imagination and the popular belief of the twentieth century. They illustrate an attitude of mind. Secondly, they help to throw a little light upon the elusive personality of Joan of Arc.

The character of the Maid is so divinely simple, and yet so baffling. This little country girl, this mere child, has puzzled wise men through ages, the long years bringing little knowledge, but an increase of strangeness, remoteness, mystery, and majesty. To some she appears but a visionary, an unpractical mystic, unsound in body and in mind, fitted by natural misfortunes to be a mouthpiece and a dupe ; others have believed her to be directly inspired and chosen by God to do His work ; others again have considered her in the aspect of a military genius, a famed leader of men, a trainer of arms, who could teach "the doubtful battle where to rage." They have praised her courage, both physical and moral, her shrewd common sense, and her powers of endurance. Some have pointed out her gentleness and divine compassion, the side of her nature which was all feminine, with its smiles and prayers, its shrinkings, its modesty and its fears, its little pretty vanities and its love of colour. The English of her own day firmly believed Joan to be a witch, the chosen of Satan, prince of witches. The truth is that the Maid was great. Her dominating quality was genius. The like of her is hard to understand. Characters such as hers are

remarkable at once for their variety and their unity. They are both simple and complex. Great geniuses, as has been said, both represent their times and transcend them. They cannot be analysed, explained, and conveniently labelled. Upon the other hand, they may be studied in their various aspects. Their characters are like great jewels cut into facets, which each in its turn attracts the eye. —

Joan of Arc was in the first place a country child. She was born at Domrémy, a little village upon the banks of the upper Meuse. Here the river winds and is broken by islands, which, with the low banks, are green with reeds and rushes. There is a wealth of mimulus and willow herb, and the river-side pastures are white with meadow-sweet in the spring-time. Willows and poplars stand with their feet almost in the water. The valley of the Meuse between Neufchateau and Vaucouleurs is flat and grassy, bounded by round wooded hills. Its aspect, even in summer, is rather sad, though fair and fertile; it is often veiled in a light mist. In winter it is very cold and damp, and the people of that country are, as of necessity, strong and hardy. In character they are honest, contented, but rather grave than gay. The father of Joan, Jacques d'Arc, was a small farmer. He kept horses which he took out to plough the fields, whilst his cattle grazed in the common meadow. He was well off as things went in Domrémy, and looked up to in the village. Nevertheless, times were rough and hard, and the cottage where the Maid was born, and cradled by her mother, was a humble one. It had a sloping roof of flat stones, which descended almost to the ground upon the garden side, whilst in the opposite wall small window-places were pierced for light and air. Spades and harrows and other implements of labour were piled up by the threshold in a rusty, muddy heap. The little

orchard was planted with flowers and pot herbs beneath the trees. It was red and white with blossom all the month of May.

Joan grew up healthy and strong. She lived simply and sparingly, and she had work to do according to her years and her powers. When she was old enough she tended her father's flocks and herds in the fields, spending long hours in the fresh open air, on the green grass, running in the sunlight, or resting under the trees, with other children of the village. There was a little neighbour, Hauviette, some three or four years younger than herself, whom she loved. Sometimes they would sleep at night in the same bed. There was another, Mengette, whose parents lived quite close to Joan's cottage, and a boy, the son of Simonin Musnier, and him Joan nursed when he was sick of a fever.

Now within half a league of Domrémy, or thereabouts, was a hill thickly covered with dark trees, forming a forest, in which roamed wild boars and wolves, which were the terror of the country-side. This forest, which Joan could see from her father's door, was called the Oak Wood, or *Bois Chesnu*. At the foot of the hill, upon the village side, there was a clear spring, with wild and thorny currant bushes growing all about it, and it was called the *Fontaine-aux-Groseillers*, but sometimes the village folk named it the *Fontaine-aux-Bonnes-Fées-Notre-Seigneur*, because, as they said, good fairies came there. Also persons sick of fevers and other diseases came to drink the waters of the fountain, for they were healing waters. When the sick persons were somewhat recovered they would walk near a great beech tree that grew hard by, or rest in its shade. This tree was very old and very beautiful, and its branches, which spread out and drooped till they touched the ground, were held in reverence by all. A man of that country was heard to

say that lily-flowers were not fairer. The tree was called the "Ladies' Tree," or the "Fairies' Tree," or the "Fair May," or the "Fairies' tree of Bourlemont," because it belonged to the family of Bourlemont, who were Lords of the Manor. As for the fairies, the people of Domrémy set great store by them, for they had powers over the destinies of men. Some thought they were the spirits of woods and streams, others had a strange belief that they were piteous ladies deserted by their lovers long, long ago. All respected them and did them honour. They were bidden to baptisms, where they bestowed gifts upon the newly christened child, and had their portion of the christening-feast spread in the room adjoining the mother's, where they ate alone, and came and went silently, invisibly, as they would. Some fairies were very good, but they were mostly jealous, capricious, and difficult to please, without being actually evil. Once offended, they would work charms and spells and glamours to men and women's undoing. Sometimes one of them would bewitch a knight or a shepherd lad, luring a lover away to her mysterious fairy place. Such things had their end in bitter disillusionment and sadness. Pierre, Lord of Bourlemont, who was wont to meet his fairy love at the Ladies' Tree, got no good of his trysts, but died the last of his line. Joan told her judges at Rouen that she had never seen fairies at that tree as far as she knew, but her godmother, the wife of Maire Aubery, said that she had seen them with her eyes. Joan did not know how far this might be true. She had heard talk of those that travel in the air with the fairies, but deemed it idle talk unworthy of credence. The Gospel of St. John was read aloud in the fairy haunts, and after that, it was thought, the fairies came there no more.

Be all this as it may, the children and the young people of Domrémy loved the fairy-tree of Bourlemont, and sported

in its green shade. It was the custom of the country, at that time, to make holiday upon the fourth Sunday in Lent, which the Church called *Lætare* Sunday, because at the Mass that day they sing an introit which begins “*Lætare Jerusalem.*” Whilst Joan was yet a babe, the Lord Pierre of Bourlemont and his wife Beatrice and her mother, the Lady Catherine de Bauffremont Ruppes, presided at the Domrémy revels which were held at the Fairies’ Tree, the village maidens and the damoiselles from the castle mingling in joyous and graceful groups, and after the Lord Pierre had died childless, and the lands of Bourlemont had passed to his niece, Jeanne de Joinville, who died far away in Nancy, the pretty pastoral was still continued. Boys and girls went in procession to the “Tree” and hung their fresh flower garlands upon its branches. Afterwards they spread their table upon the grass and feasted off nuts and eggs, and bread, specially baked in a particular form, and drank the light red wine of the country. Then they took to singing songs, or they joined hands and danced gaily till set of sun. Joan said at Rouen, “I have seen the young girls putting garlands on the branches of this tree, and I myself have sometimes put them there with my companions; sometimes we took these garlands away, sometimes we left them. . . . Since I was grown up, I no not remember to have danced there. I may have danced there formerly with the other children. I have sung there more than danced.”

There was an island in the river close to Domrémy, which divided the stream of the Meuse. Upon this island there was a stronghold that folk called the Castle of the Island. Before the castle was a court, with a strong wall and a fair garden, the whole surrounded by a moat. There was a chapel too, built in Our Lady’s honour, and round about all this were lovely green meadows. This demesne

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was held by the Lord Pierre of Bourlemont, but when he died, certain of the villagers of Domrémy, Jacques d'Arc Joan's father amongst them, hired it for a sum of money, to be a safe place in time of war. Here, when there were forays and scourings of the country-side, the people drove their flocks and herds for safety. At other times the children went there and played at battles and sieges, bore themselves bravely in mock tourneys, and mimicked the ways of chivalry. It is likely that Joan, the Maid, walked often in the forlorn gardens. What were her dreams in that place of ancient poetry, of love and war, of chivalry and romance? Did she hear the echo of lute-strings broken long since, the stamping of hoofs and champing of bits in the base court, the tread of armed feet, the sighs of watching ladies whose lords were at the wars? Did she hear whispers, and the rustle of long, brocaded sleeves? Did she see wan and gracious ghosts in the river mist? Did she feel in the air the sweetness of young companionships, and the sadness of farewells? Had she here in the shadow of the deserted castle her first vague apprehension of the great courtly world? Who can tell? The imagination is pleased to join the Castle on the Island with the Fairies' Tree, the lovelorn fays, the garlands and the junketings, the skipping lambs and the fields of scented meadow-sweet—all those things innocent, delightful, and mysterious which belong to the Idyll of Domrémy.

The Maid's father was one Jacques d'Arc, as has been said. As has been said also, he was a man in comparatively comfortable circumstances, a prominent member of his humble community, and much looked up to by the people of his village. He was one of the little company who rented the Castle on the Island, and he represented Domrémy before the authorities upon a matter connected with the taxation of the householders. He probably derived his

surname from the village of Arc, in the Duchy of Bar, in which village there is evidence that his forbears had their dwelling. It is thought that the family removed from Arc in Bar to Ceffonds in Champagne, and that Jacques d'Arc came from thence to Domrémy. He had two brothers, Nicolas d'Arc and Jean, which latter took the oath in 1436 as King's surveyor for the woods and forests of the department of France. Amongst these excessively meagre facts, the only point of real interest is that Jacques d'Arc seems to have been a person of some strength and persistence of character, possessing certain of the qualities of a leader of men. It is known that when Joan left her home to go into France her father was averse to, and indeed bitterly resented, her strange course of action. This was natural enough. Two years before she declared her mission, however, he dreamed a disturbing dream. He thought that he heard the noise of battle, and that he beheld his daughter going away with a throng of men-at-arms. He was angry and frightened, saying to his sons, "If indeed such a thing should happen you must drown her, or I will!" This foreboding dream is significant, for it reveals a sensitive strain in the rugged peasant ancestry of Joan of Arc.

The Maid's mother was Isabel Romée of Vouthon, a village to the south-west of Domrémy. Her family, it seems, must have been of quite modest condition, for one of her brothers was a thatcher, and her nephew, Perrinet de Vouthon, was a carpenter. Nevertheless, she had a brother in Holy orders who was the curé of Sermaize, and Nicolas de Vouthon, cousin-german to the Maid, was educated as a monk, and entered the Abbey of Cheminon, near Sermaize, where he followed the religious life. Thus the ecclesiastical element entered very intimately into Joan's early surroundings; for it is known that the Arcs of Domrémy maintained familiar and affectionate relations with their

kinsfolk of Sermaize, and one of them records that in the time of his youth he went with his father "to the house of Jacquot d'Arc and Ysabelot, wife of the said Jacquot," and that there he had good cheer. For the rest, the sister of the good curé of Sermaize was herself pious. She entertained mendicants and wandering friars, and gave charity to the poor according to her means. She undertook a pilgrimage to Puy in 1429, and her surname of *Romée* possibly indicates that at some time she had accomplished the great journey to Rome itself. Jacques d'Arc and his wife had five children : Jacquemin, Jean, and Pierre, three sons, a daughter Catherine, and Joan, the Maid of France. She was born between 1410 and 1412, probably in the latter year, and soon was carried to the Parish Church to be baptized. This church, dedicated to St. Remy, was but a stone's throw from her father's house, and the child was carried across the churchyard which adjoined her father's garden. According to the custom of the time, Joan had several godparents. Her godfathers were Jean Morel of Greux, labourer ; Jean Barrey of Neufchateau, Jean le Langart, and Jean Rainguesson. Her godmothers were Jeannette, the wife of Thevenin le Royer, called Roze, of Domrémy ; Beatrix, the wife of Estellin, a labourer, of the same place ; Jeanne, the wife of d'Aubret ; Jeannette, the wife of Thiesslin de Vittel, a clerk at Neufchateau—a learned woman this, for she had heard stories read out of books. All these stood as sureties for the Maid when she was received into the fold of the Church, and in her name renounced the devil and all his works. Messire Jean Minnet pronounced exorcisms over her innocent head. These exorcisms, it is said, were made twice as long for a girl as for a boy, for the Church distrusted woman's nature and feared woman's wiles. The child was named Jeanne, after many of her godparents, after St. John the

Baptist, "the blessed saint of snow-white purity"; after St. John the Evangelist, the beloved apostle, whose head rested upon the bosom of Our Lord. In her own country she was always called Jeannette, but from the time that she went into France men called her Jeanne. As she grew up, the child was not taught to read or write. She says herself that she could not tell A from B. She says: "From my mother I learnt my *Pater Noster*, my *Ave Maria*, and my *Credo*. I believe I learnt all these from my mother."

It seems that Joan was always rather a grave child, not indeed that she was taciturn or unfriendly—far from it; but even in her earliest youth there seems to have been some quality, the possession of which separated her in a slight, and yet sufficiently marked degree, from the generality of careless childhood. Years later, the men and women who were called upon to bear witness to her character, show that consciously or unconsciously they felt this.

Jean Waterin, a labourer of Greux (a village close to Domrémy), speaks thus: "I saw Jeannette very often. In our childhood we often followed together her father's plough, and we went together with the other children of the village to the meadows or pastures. Often, when we were all at play, Jeannette would retire alone to 'talk with God.' I and the others laughed at her for this. She was simple and good, frequenting the church and holy places. Often, when she was in the fields and heard the bells ring, she would drop on her knees."

Isabelette, one of Joan's girl friends, says: "She was not fond of playing, at which we, her companions, complained. She liked work. . . . She was never seen idling in the roads. She was more often in church at prayer." And Menette, the wife of Jean Joyart, adds: "She was a good girl, simple and pious—so much so that I and her companions told her she was too pious."

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What a strange little revelation of human nature! A detail of childish association, coming thus across the ages, so remote, yet so intimate, it is full of pathos and significance.

From these most trifling indications may be inferred a complete aspect of the Maid's character—her life in microcosm. Already the saint-like nature is apparent in its marvellous simplicity, its singleness of aim, its confidence and its superb lack of self-consciousness. Probably it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a saint to have a sense of humour. God knows it were a sin to bring a heart from heaven down to earth, or to turn praying lips to laughter; it were irreverence to wish to see the satyr in the angel. Enthusiasm, strength, and purity are often possessed at the expense of breadth of mind, and truly these qualities are thus cheaply paid for. Besides, in the fifteenth century broad-mindedness had not become the fashion. Isabelette, Menegette, and those other children of Domrémy, were little rascals. Later on the lazy, self-seeking courtiers of the Dauphin Charles VII., and indeed the Dauphin Charles himself, were egregious villains in their dealings with the Maid; their attitude is the common one of the world towards a saint, one of unreasonable irritation and embarrassment. It is an attitude which is to be condemned. At the same time, it may be understood.

Of the pensive piety of the little Maid, Jean Morel, one of her godfathers, is witness. He says: "From her early youth, Jeannette was brought up with care, in the Faith and in good morals; she was so good that all the village of Domrémy loved her. Jeannette knew her *Credo* and her *Pater* and her *Ave* as well as any of her companions. She had modest ways. . . . When she heard the Mass bell, if she were in the fields, she would go back to the village

and to the church in order to hear Mass. I have been witness of this many times. I have seen her confess at Eastertide and at other solemn feasts. I saw her confess to Messire Guillaume Fronte, who was then curé of the parish of St. Remy." Another witness says : "She never swore, and to affirm strongly contented herself with saying, 'Without fail.' She was no dancer, and sometimes when the others were singing and dancing she went to prayer." And the church bell-ringer says : "From her earliest years till her departure, Jeannette, the Maid, was a good girl, chaste, simple, modest, never blaspheming God nor the saints, fearing God. She loved to go to church, and confessed often. I can attest what I say, for I was then attached to the church of St. Remy, and often I saw Jeanne come there to Mass and other offices. When I forgot to ring for service Jeanne scolded me, saying I had done wrong ; and she promised to give me some of the wool of her flock if I would ring more diligently."

On Saturdays, for that is the day of Our Blessed Lady, the Mother of God, Joan would set out, sometimes with her sister, and sometimes alone, upon a pious journey. She climbed the hill behind Greux, which is covered with grass and with the well-tended vine, and gained a little wooded place, watered by the holy fountain of St. Thiebault. Here there was a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Bermont. In the summer-time it was a sweet spot, visited by the scents of the meadows and the woods. Here the Virgin sat, crowned and enthroned, with her Divine Child in her arms, and Joan and other children came and prayed to her, or brought her flowers for her shrine. It pleased Joan to go often to the Hermitage of the Blessed Marie of Bermont, near Domrémy. She was there, when her parents thought her with the plough or in the fields. In this sacred and quiet place she loved to muse, and to look down upon

her little, well-beloved village of Domrémy, which she was so soon to leave for ever. She had the gift of charity, and "for the love of God she gave alms, and if she had had money would have given it to the curé, Guillaume Fronto, for Masses to be said." She had great pity for the poor, and would often lie by the hearth all night long, so that the needy wayfarer might sleep warm in her bed. She loved the village church and its holy precinct, which lay touching her own father's garden. Daily she knelt upon the stone floor and prayed alone, or upon feast days listened devoutly to the admonitions of the curé. Willingly she heard the stories of the saints. It is likely that she saw acted rustic Mysteries, and touched the holy relics that were borne about for exhibition. St. Remy she revered as the patron of her parish. St. Michael she adored, and also the Lady St. Catherine of Alexandria and the Lady St. Margaret.

Joan lived in a time which, in spite of changes, in spite of the creeping in of disquieting elements, was still the Age of Faith. Religion, at all events for people such as the villagers of Domrémy, was a passionate and a vital thing. In a hard, uncertain life, where there was much labour and danger, poverty and pain, and many farewells, scanty food and little ease of body or luxury of mind, religion represented to them all that was beautiful or mysterious. The Church, the Bible story, the legends of the saints—these were their imagination's only food, their art, literature, ethics, poetry, and science in one. Here was education, comfort, excitement, purity of form and richness of colour. All their aspirations, their vague yearnings, their hopes and fears, their generous inspirations, they expressed in terms of religion. Good fortune and evil, the works of nature, the properties of plants and animals and stones, the events of history, the vagaries of heredity and the surprises of character, were then susceptible

of direct explanation in the light of Christianity—that is to say, the Christianity of the Middle Ages, which was warranted to contain the key to every problem of life. The like claim must of course be made for every religion that is, so to speak, worth its salt. Nevertheless, the situation to-day, for instance, is very different from the situation as it was in the fifteenth century. Putting scepticism on one side, the most devout modern Christian admits, at least tacitly, that difficulties remain unexplained, and questions remain unanswered, this being no aspersion upon the power of the religion, but merely a proof of the incompleteness of human understanding. The key to all mysteries is there, but it is very hard to discover. In the Middle Ages, however, a key was invariably produced, set into the lock and turned. Simple, ardent, and faithful minds did not ask many questions, but thankfully accepted the results. The Faith of the Middle Ages was extremely beautiful and touching ; it fostered exquisite types, saints both contemplative and militant. It was absolute, indisputable, and unelastic. It has passed away with the type of civilization of which it was the glory.

It is curious to remark at once how simple and how complex in character was this religion of the fifteenth century. It was simple because of the finality of its dictates, the sharpness of its distinctions, its broad, dramatic qualities. It was of necessity complex, for it was obliged to answer without hesitation a mass of most varied questions, and to bear a vast burden of detail, when a new legend had to be invented to meet every fresh contingency.

The religion of Joan of Arc was not a thing kept wrapped up in a napkin to be brought out upon occasion ; it was not a mere ornament of her character ; it was an intrinsic part of that character. It was indeed, together with another element closely related to it, the leading quality of her

character, its mainspring. The Maid's every fibre was permeated with holy ardour. Her times were religious, her village was devout, her family was especially so. She herself was a dedicated spirit. Yet there was apparently never any question of her leading the religious life in recognized conventional manner. She never set herself apart from the rest of mankind, as is the way of mystics (except indeed in one notable particular, for she vowed to keep sacred her virginity so long as it should be God's will), she never tortured or injured her body, nor has it been recorded that she fasted unduly, although she was moderate to the degree of abstemiousness. There was never word, so far as can be known, of her entering a religious community. She was reserved, but not selfishly wrapped up in her own dreams. There is no reason to suppose that she was anything but perfectly natural and healthy, both in mind and in body, that she was ever, by her religious exaltation, rendered unable or unwilling to perform those simple and everyday duties belonging to the humble station in which her God had placed her. She never disobeyed her parents or deceived them, except when she "went into France." She was not absent-minded or awkward about everyday affairs. She was, on the contrary, intelligent and alert. She possessed adaptability, perseverance, and powers of endurance, and was, in fact, remarkable for a practical turn of mind and a sound common sense. Isabelette, wife of Gerradin of Epinal, said of her : "She liked work ; and would spin, labour with her father, look after the house, and sometimes mind the sheep." And Joan herself said at Rouen, in answer to her judges : "I learnt to spin and to sew ; in sewing and spinning I fear no woman in Rouen. . . . When I was at home with my father I employed myself in the ordinary cares of the house." She did not shrink from the responsibility and the tediousness of the sick-room,

and was probably in request as a nurse, for she was both gentle and capable. Simon Musnier of Domrémy said : "She liked to take care of the sick. I know this of a surety, for in my childhood I fell ill, and it was she who nursed me."

There was another quality developed in the Maid to its highest degree—that of loyalty, or patriotism. This quality she cherished in the closest connexion with her passionate, religious sense, and her power of human sympathy, and it was composed of two elements : an allegiance to the person of the Dauphin Charles, which she could not but render active ; and a "great pity for the Realm of France."

The Realm of France in truth stood in dire need of the pity of one of her sort. Something of its condition in various departments has been described, but it is difficult to form an adequate idea of the misery, the danger, the anarchical confusion and the moral apathy which then prevailed. France as a nation was in a parlous state. To what extent the child Joan in her remote village appreciated the political situation cannot be determined.

The inhabitants of obscure rural districts are not at present usually interested in large national issues, and it is probable that in this they resemble their predecessors of the fifteenth century. Hodge is no disinterested patriot. Most likely the Domrémy shepherds' honest ambition in this connexion was personal peace and security in which to acquire and enjoy a modicum of prosperity. On the other hand, there was no lack of information in Domrémy as to what was going forward in the outer world. The village was situated on the direct route from France proper into the Duchy of Lorraine, and the roads at that time were swarming with travellers. Soldiers, swashbucklers, vagabonds, and free lances of all sorts, mountebanks and pedlars, strolling players and jugglers, respectable merchants bound for fairs and great public markets, knights-errant, mendicant

friars and wandering university scholars—these passed by the cottage of Jacques d'Arc, and doubtless, according to their knowledge or their fantasy, they spread news of dangers, battles, and disasters, such as the piteous battle of Verneuil fought in August 1424. Party feeling ran high in the region of Domrémy. This hamlet was stoutly loyal to the uncrowned Dauphin Charles, but the neighbouring village of Maxey was Burgundian in sentiment, and each handful of rustics was tenacious of its principles. The very children aped their elders, and were used frequently to wage sanguinary, but no doubt delightful, battles, and to return to their respective homes covered with gore and glory.

Life was restless and unsafe even at Domrémy. The villagers were surrounded by fighting and plundering lords, the Dukes of Lorraine and Bar, the Count of Vaudemont, and the terrible Damoiseau de Commercy, a light-hearted marauder who regarded neither Dauphin Charles nor Duke of Burgundy overmuch. From 1419 to 1425, and onwards, there were frequent plunderings and pillagings by bands of English and Burgundians, or by parties abroad upon their own responsibility. The inhabitants of Domrémy were driven to take refuge in their "Castle on the Island." Here they brought their cattle and their women and children, and were in comparative safety. Once they were forced to escape to the town of Neufchateau. Joan went there with her parents, and stayed at the house of a worthy woman called La Rousse.

The days and nights at Domrémy were sometimes filled with sudden fear. A sentinel was posted upon the church tower to give the alarm in case of need, and to ring the church bells in token of warning. All this was without doubt sufficiently disturbing, but there is no hint that Joan or those about her became panic-stricken or hysterical, or

even that they brooded overmuch upon their miseries. It is more probable that they took things to a great extent as a matter of course. Monsieur Simeon Luce (an intelligent historian of the times) remarks that people became extremely fond of athletic sports during the Hundred Years' War, and played hockey and football enthusiastically and extensively.

Joan of Arc did not draw her inspiration from her immediate environment. She did not brood upon the discontents of Domrémy, or set forth with the intention of redressing its grievances. Her gaze was set far beyond the threshold of her father's house.

With the extraordinary and indefinable instinct of genius, that power which transcends years, education, and experience, she felt the "great pity that there was in France." As a youth makes perfect poetry, having no experience of the passions and regrets of which he sings, as a child makes music full of meaning, though he has no knowledge of the human heart, so the Maid became cognizant of the great issues with which she was to deal. The origin of these things is sealed.

As to the other element of Joan of Arc's patriotism, her devotion to the person of Charles VII., it is an example of what may be called the mystical cult of Royalty. The Maid's feeling for her uncrowned King was religious. She regarded him as the direct representative of Almighty God, and as holding the kingdom of France in trust. There is told a curious little legend in connexion with this belief. One day the Maid asked the King a boon. When he consented, she claimed as a gift the kingdom of France. The King was surprised; nevertheless, he did not take back his promise. The Maid having received this gift, wished that an Act to this effect should be solemnly drawn up by the King's four notaries, and that the Act should be read. Whilst the King listened to this reading, she showed him to

those that were present, and said, "Here is the poorest knight in the kingdom." And after a little while, in the presence of the notaries disposing of the kingdom of France, she gave it back to God. Then, acting in the name of God, she invested the King Charles with it, and ordered that respecting this solemn transmission a solemn Act should be drawn up. This religion of royalty, which is of course not confined to the Maid or to her times, has in it something extremely noble and extremely touching. As an inspiration or as a moving force it has extraordinary power. The shining example of its influence in modern days is to be found in the conduct of the Japanese patriots in the Russo-Japanese war. It is a religion apparently which inspires courage, both physical and moral, incredible self-sacrifice, fortitude, tenacity, and absolute fearlessness.

CHAPTER III

A FIRST STUDY OF VISIONS AND VOICES

ON Thursday, 22 February 1430-31, Joan of Arc was brought before her judges in the Ornament Room at the end of the Great Hall of the Castle of Rouen. She was warned and required, on pain of law, "to make oath . . . and to swear simply and absolutely to speak truth on all things in respect of which she should be questioned." To which she answered, "I swore yesterday, and that should be enough." And afterwards she said, "You burden me overmuch." Finally she made oath to speak truth on *that which touches the Faith*.

Then Maître Jean Beaupère did question the said Joan as follows :—

"First of all I exhort you, as you have so sworn, to tell the truth on what I am about to ask you."

Jeanne answered : "You may well ask me some things on which I shall tell you the truth, and some on which I shall not tell it to you. If you were well informed about me, you would wish to have me out of your hands. *I have done nothing except by revelation.*" And after this, she said : "I was thirteen when I heard a Voice from God for my help and guidance. The first time that I heard this Voice I was very much afraid ; it was midday in the summer in my father's garden. I had not fasted the day before. I heard this Voice to my right towards the church. Rarely do I hear it without its being accompanied also by a light. This light comes from the same side as the Voice. Generally it is a great light. Since I came into France I have often heard this Voice."

"But how could you see this light you speak of when the light was at the side?"

To this question she answered nothing, but went on to something else. "If I were in a wood I could easily hear the Voice which came to me. It seemed to me to come from lips I should reverence. I believe it was sent me from God. When I heard it for the third time I recognized that it was the Voice of an angel. This Voice has always guarded me well, and I have always understood it. It instructed me to be good and to go often to church; it told me it was necessary for me to come into France. You ask me under what form this Voice appeared to me. You will hear no more of it from me this time. It said to me two or three times a week, 'You must go into France.' My father knew nothing of my going. The Voice said to me, 'Go into France.' I could stay no longer. . . ."

This is a simple account of the earlier spiritual experiences of Joan of Arc. It is simple to the degree of baldness—plain, direct, and brief in the extreme. Yet it contains points of interest, details at once significant, difficult, and important. In the first place, it was the very first time that Joan described her Visions and her Voices in any connected manner. There had been a word here and a word there; Joan was said to "talk with God," to be comforted by a heavenly council. Her mission and its alleged divine origin was, of course, famous almost from the beginning, but details as to the manner of her commerce with the saints were systematically withheld. She says herself that in Domrémy she told no one of her Visions and her Voices, and this silence was preserved even in her relations with her good friend and adviser the curé. In this matter some argue that she did well, whilst others maintain that she was very grievously wrong.

The Maid was about thirteen years old when first she

heard her Voice. She was therefore but a child. She stood in the mystic beauty and pathos of her tender years. Like the child David, she occupied herself with tending her father's sheep, and was chosen by Heaven. Like the child Samuel, she possessed the open ear and the receptive mind. In her innocent consciousness there were fair spaces, where she might receive her dear brothers and sisters, the happy saints of Paradise. There were silences so deep and exquisite that in them she might hear the sweet voices of the everlastingly blest. How lovely and delicate a work is the mind of a child—pure, poetic, imaginative, religious!

When the Maid heard the Voice she was very much afraid. Presumably she was startled, for long expected or familiar voices do not terrify. So her Visions first came to her as a great surprise, as something new and wonderful from without. However, she at once recognized the nature of the Voice that spoke. It seemed to her to come from lips that she should reverence ; she believed it was sent to her from God. When she had heard it for the third time she knew that it was the Voice of an angel. It said to her repeatedly and insistently, " Go into France. . . . Go raise the siege which is before Orleans." At first she answered (as she declares later in her trial), " I am a simple, untaught girl who can neither ride nor fight ; therefore how can these things be ? " But still she heard the Voice, very often, two or three times a week, both in the church, through the murmur of folk at their prayers, and elsewhere, and still it said, " Go into France." And hearing, she knew she could stay quiet in Domrémy no more.

So also Mary, a maid of Nazareth, heard the Voice of an angel announcing what should come, and was troubled and said, " How shall this be ? " But afterwards she understood and bowed her head and murmured, " Behold the handmaid of the Lord ; be it unto me according to Thy word."

In answer to a question from the judges, Joan said she had not fasted the day before she first heard her Voices, and beheld the glory of light that came with them. Therefore these were no illusions brought about by austerities too severe for a youthful frame. On this occasion both the Voice and the light were upon her right side (which was also in the direction of the church), but this was not always the case, for with one of her visions at any rate, "there was abundance of light from every side, as was fitting."

"Be a good girl and go often to church," said the Maid's heavenly council, and this part, which was the first and foremost part of her revelation, Joan put into practice at once. From the first time that she heard her Voices, she vowed her virginity for so long as it should please God, not (as she says expressly) that she believed that in losing her maidenhood she would also lose her happiness, and hear her sweet Voices no more, but rather that she might be able to concentrate herself the more entirely upon the performance of her peculiar duty, and become a spirit wholly dedicated to do the will of God. Her nature, already innocent and pure, became daily deeper and more mysterious. At thirteen years old she put away childish things, and danced no more, poor little Maid, about the Fairies' Tree. More and more pensive and more and more reserved she grew; she sought solitude and the holy shrine of Our Lady of Bermont. The leafy, sighing woods gave her counsel. Through the ringing of the church bells she heard words of wisdom and comfort and power. Kneeling with the faithful, it seemed as if she heard with her bodily ears the answers to her prayers, and beheld with her bodily eyes angels and archangels and all the company of Heaven. The Communion of Saints became the most salient, the essential fact of her existence. Her childish piety developed into a passion for things spiritual, which possessed her like a fire. She enjoyed times of sublime exaltation when she lay

prostrate before the Sacrament of her Saviour's body, her face at once radiant and bathed in tears.

For the space of about five years she waited thus, loving and praying and working, for it is not recorded that she ever failed in homely duties, or was ever unfit or unwilling, but was humble, strong, self-reliant, and sensible. Thus Heaven and her own noble heart prepared her for what was to come. At length came the hour, and the Maid knew she might delay no longer. Clearly, unmistakably, ‘The Voice said to me, ‘Go into France. Daughter of God, be strong and fear not. Go, raise the siege which is being made before the city of Orleans. Go,’ it added, ‘to Robert de Baudricourt, Captain of Vaucouleurs. He will furnish you with an escort to accompany you.’”

Now Joan, as she said herself, would rather have been torn to pieces by wild horses than set forth upon so strange and fearful an adventure, but that she knew her commands were laid upon her by God. Howbeit, she summoned up her courage and her wit and took action. Durand Lassois (who was her kinsman by marriage, for he had to wife the daughter of Joan's mother's sister) lived at Little Burey, a village within a league of Vaucouleurs. His wife, Joan's cousin, was going to have a child, and Joan offered to go to Little Burey to nurse her when her time should come. Beaupère, one of Joan's judges, considered that she had “a good deal of feminine subtlety.” Very probably he was correct in this estimation of her character.

Durand Lassois welcomed her to his home in Little Burey, and she prevailed upon him to take her to Vaucouleurs, and somehow or another the pair of them gained admittance to the presence of Robert de Baudricourt, the captain of that town, a rough, blunt, and practical man of war, but very loyal to the French cause, and devoted to the Dauphin Charles.

Bertrand de Poulengy, an esquire, a young man who

knew Domrémy well, and also Joan and her parents and the Fairies' Tree, was present at the interview, and thus testifies concerning it : " Jeanne came to Vaucouleurs, I think, about Ascension Day (13 May 1428). I saw her speaking to the Captain Robert de Baudricourt. She told him that she came to him in the name of her Lord, and said, ' Let him guard himself well and not offer battle to his foes, for the Lord will give him succour by Mid-Lent (March 1429). She said that the kingdom belonged not to the Dauphin but to her Lord ; that her Lord would have the Dauphin king, and hold the kingdom in trust ; that she would make him king in spite of his enemies, and would conduct him to his coronation.' ' But who is this Lord,' said Robert de Baudricourt, ' of whom you speak ? ' Jeanne said, ' The King of Heaven.' "

That time she went back to her father's house.

Durand Lassois' contribution to the records is yet more vivid : " She (Joan) told me she wished to go into France, to the Dauphin, to have him crowned. ' Was it not foretold formerly,' she said to me, 'that France should be desolated by a woman, and should be restored by a Maid?' She told me she wished to go herself and seek Robert de Baudricourt in order that he might have her conducted to the Dauphin. But many times Robert told me to have her taken back to her father and to box her ears."

So Joan for this time went back to Domrémy. She now spoke quite freely and openly of her mission. On the eve of the feast of St. John she said to Michael Lebuin, a youth of about her own age : " There is a Maid between Coussy and Vaucouleurs who, within the year, will have the King crowned at Rheims." And another, Jean Waterin, several times heard her say that she would save France and restore the royal line. Others averred that the knowledge of these things had come to her at the Fairies' Tree, but she denied this.

During the summer months skirmishes and forays were frequent in and about Domrémy. Farther afield the fortunes of unhappy France were going from bad to worse. By the end of October the Maid and her neighbours knew that the English had besieged the city of Orleans, the Dauphin's loyal stronghold. Orleans once fallen into the hands of the enemy, the beginning of the end would indeed be come. Then, woe to the fair towns of Blois, Tours, and Chinon; woe to Charles and the national cause.

About the middle of January 1429 Joan arose and left Domrémy and her father's house for ever. Her father was not consenting to her departure. She set forth with Durand Lassois, her kinsman, on foot, and passing by the house of Gerard Guillemette, she cried, "Adieu! I go to Vaucouleurs." To her companion, Menette, she said, "Farewell, and God bless you!" but to little Hauviette, whom she loved, she said nothing at all, not having the heart. When Hauviette knew that Joan had gone into France she wept bitterly.

The Maid lodged at Vaucouleurs, in the house of one Henri Royer and his wife Catherine. But for many weeks the Captain Robert de Baudricourt turned a deaf ear to her words. During this time she waited, chafing at delay, but confessing herself often to the priest and praying continually in the Church of St. Mary, on the hill above Vaucouleurs. A child saw her there in the crypt, kneeling and weeping piteously, and afterwards bore witness. Now there was in the town one Jean de Novelpont (also called Jean de Metz), a young knight and soldier of fortune, who came to know the Maid. By chance, through curiosity or for some other reason, he betook himself to the house of Henri Royer, and there saw the Maid "dressed in a red dress, poor and worn." He spoke gently to her, and said, "*Ma mie*, what do you here? Must the King be driven from his kingdom, and are we all to be English?" She

answered, “ I am come to this good town of the King’s to speak to Robert de Baudricourt, to the end that he may take me, or have me taken, to the King ; but Robert cares not for me, nor for my words. Nevertheless, before the middle of Lent I must be with the King, even if in coming to him I wear my legs down to the knees ! No one in the world, neither kings nor dukes, nor the daughter¹ of the King of Scotland, nor any others, can recover the kingdom of France, neither can the King have any succour save from me ; nevertheless, I had rather spin with my poor mother. For these things are not proper to my station. Yet I must go, and I must do them, because it is the will of my Lord.” Then the knight said, “ Who is your Lord ? ” And Joan answered, “ My Lord is God.”

After she had thus spoken, the knight pledged his faith, and swore, laying his hand between her two hands, thus, “ I will bring you to the King, God helping me. And now, when will you start ? ” And Joan answered, “ Rather to-day than to-morrow, and rather to-morrow than later.” “ Can you make the journey dressed as you are ? ” Jean de Metz asked her. She replied that she would willingly take a man’s dress as more fitting and convenient. Then he gave her the dress and equipment of one of his men-at-arms.

Soon after this interview came the first signs of relenting on the part of the Captain Robert de Baudricourt. Catherine Royer, with whom Joan lodged, says : “ One day I saw Robert de Baudricourt—then Captain of Vaucouleurs—and Messire Jean Fournier, our curé, come into our house to visit her. After they were gone she told me that the priest had his stole, and that in the presence of the said Captain he adjured her, saying, ‘ If you are an evil spirit,

¹ Margaret, daughter of James I. of Scotland, who was betrothed to Louis, afterwards Louis XI.

avaunt ! If you are a good spirit, approach ! ' Then Jeanne drew near the priest and threw herself at his knees ; she said he was wrong to do so, for he had heard her confession. When she saw that Robert refused to conduct her to the King, she said to me that nevertheless she would go and seek the Dauphin. ' Do you not know,' she said, — the prophecy which says that France, lost by a woman, shall be saved by a Maiden from the Marches of Lorraine ? ' I did indeed remember the prophecy, and remained stupefied.'

— About this time the Duke of Lorraine, who was old and ill, sent for Joan to come to Nancy to heal him of his sickness. Joan rode there with Durand Lassois. Of how to cure him Joan said frankly that she knew nothing, but she promised gladly that she would pray for him. Some say that she exhorted him to change his mode of life, which was evil. It is certain that she asked for René of Anjou, his son-in-law, and men-at-arms to go into France. René was brother to the Queen of France, and a fine, ardent young man at that time. The Duke of Lorraine gave Joan a black horse and a present of money, and with these she returned to Vaucouleurs.

Now some say that this is the reason that the Captain came to Joan and brought a priest to exorcise her. On the twelfth day of February Joan went to him and said : " In God's name you keep me here overlong ; for this very day near Orleans a great disaster has befallen the gentle Dauphin, and he shall have worse fortune still unless you send me to him." Now upon this twelfth day of Februarty the French did indeed suffer defeat at Rouvray, near Orleans, where was fought the famous battle of Herrings, and Robert de Baudricourt shortly came to know of it. Then he marvelled, for he saw that Joan had the gift of second-sight, which is a thing not of this world, but inspired

either by God or the devil. So the Captain was troubled in his mind, and full of doubts. And at long length, whether for this reason or for another, he gave the Maid leave to depart. As for her, she was eaten up with longing to be gone, and had sighed her soul out to Catherine Royer. "The time weighs upon me," she said, "and I long to go, as a woman with child longs for her delivery." She gladly put off her red kirtle, and donned long breeches, boots, spurs, and tunic, so that she looked like a boy, and cut her hair short *en rond* above her ears, and wore a page's cap. Thus accoutred she came to the gate of Vaucouleurs, riding upon a horse that the people of the town had given her. Thither came also Jean de Metz and Bertrand de Poulegeny, who undertook to bring her to the Dauphin and to pay the expenses of the journey, and their two servants were with them, and a King's messenger, called Collet de Vienne, and Richard the Archer. Some of Joan's friends were sorrowful at her departure, and said, "Do not go, for the way is long and tedious and dangerous, beset with the enemies of France." But she answered, "I fear them not. My way is made plain before me. God will guide me and bring me to the gentle Dauphin. To do this was I born." Baudricourt gave her a sword, and said, "*Allez, et vienne que pourra!*" So she rode away from Vaucouleurs out through the Gate of France. This was in the evening of the 23rd of February, the time of the early snowdrops.

As this study is concerned more especially with the Visions and Voices of Joan of Arc, and with the episodes and incidents of her career directly related to them, it will not be necessary here to describe in detail her courtly or military adventures. Something of this is attempted in another place. It is proposed to consider the earlier

months of her public life, noticing examples of her extraordinary faculties in action, the nature and the power of her inspiration, the more mysterious and inexplicable part of her character and her achievements. In this connexion there is but a point or two to remark in the record of the Maid's journey from Vaucouleurs to Chinon.

On the roads infested by brigands and marauders, English and Burgundian bands of freebooters, she met with no harm, neither does she appear to have suffered overmuch from the fatigues and discomforts of rough and rapid travelling. This immunity, however, was fortunate rather than marvellous, for although journeys were dangerous in the time of Joan of Arc, they were frequently undertaken by merchants, pilgrims, students, and beggars, as well as by lords and men-at-arms. For the rest, the Maid was a strong and healthy girl, country bred, able to work and to endure with men.

As to her relations with the two chivalrous gentlemen, her guides and protectors, for her part she relied upon them, and trusted them completely. During the eleven days that they rode together (often during the night they rode too, for fear of the Burgundians), Joan's companions questioned her if she could really do all she said. "Have no fear of that," she answered. "What I am commanded to do I will do; my brothers in Paradise have told me how to act. It is four or five years since my brothers in Paradise and my Lord, that is God, told me that I must go and fight in order to regain the kingdom of France."

Jean de Metz and Bertrand de Poulegeny shall speak for themselves as regards their feelings towards the Maid. The former says: "On the way Bertrand and I slept every night by her, Jeanne being at my side fully dressed. She inspired me with such respect that for nothing in the world would I have dared to molest her. . . . I say it on

oath. . . . I had absolute faith in her. Her words and her ardent faith in God inflamed me. I believe she was sent from God."

And Bertrand, the esquire, adds: "Jeanne slept beside Jean de Metz and myself, fully dressed and armed. I was young then; nevertheless, I never felt towards her any desire. . . . I felt myself inspired by her words, for I saw she was indeed a messenger of God. Never did I see in her any evil, but always she was as good as if she had been a saint."

At length the party came to Fierbois, not far from Chinon, and there halted. The Maid heard three Masses at the church of St. Catherine of Fierbois. This St. Catherine was the good patroness of Frenchmen taken prisoners by the English and the Burgundians.

From Fierbois Joan dictated a letter to the Dauphin to inform him of her coming. She longed to see him, and believed that she should recognize him amongst all others by the counsel of her Voices. After discussions and delays Charles agreed to see her, and she took her way to the castle of Chinon where he held his Court. As she went, there was a man on horseback who insulted her and uttered blasphemies against God and against holy things. But she turned and answered him with sorrow, "In God's name do you swear, and you so near your death?" Now in less than an hour from that time the man-at-arms fell into the castle moat by misadventure and was drowned. Pasquerel, who was afterwards the Maid's confessor, swore that she herself had told him this thing.

Now the Dauphin held audience in the great hall of the castle of Chinon, and for all he was so deathly poor and his kingdom in so sorry a plight, it is likely that the scene was brave enough, for more than three hundred knights were there of the remnant of the chivalry of France,

and the torches were all lighted, for it was evening. The story goes that the Dauphin, hearing that Joan was without, a peasant girl from the Marches of Lorraine, claiming a strange mission and strange powers, was minded to try her. He bade one of the lords that was there take his place on the high seat, and himself went down and mingled with the throng. He was neither, as it seems, too well dressed, nor too well looking, and this was the better for his enterprise. Presently, with Louis the Count of Vendôme, there entered, from the darkness without, a child, a girl in boy's clothes. She wore black breeches fastened with laces and points to a tunic of grey cloth. She held a black cap in her hand. Her eyes were undazzled by the light of the torches, or by the great array of lords in their glowing colours, their velvets and jewels and cloth of gold. She did not hesitate, but went straight to the Dauphin where he stood and knelt at his feet.

Raoul, the Sieur de Gaucourt, was there, and he says : "She presented herself before the King's majesty with great lowliness and simplicity ; a poor little shepherdess ! I heard her say these words, 'Most noble Lord Dauphin, I am come and am sent to you from God to give succour to the kingdom and to you.' When she had said this the Dauphin took her apart from all the company and the two of them spoke together for a long time, and no third person could hear what was said. When they had made an end of speaking the Prince seemed to be very glad of what she had told him. He told no man what it was, but it became known that the Maid had given the Dauphin a secret sign by which he might know and be sure that she came from God."

Alain Chartier, the poet, wrote in a letter : "As to what she said to the King, nobody knows that. But it was most manifest that the King was greatly encouraged,

as if by the Spirit." In another place it is said that Joan spoke to the Dauphin concerning matters only known to God and to himself. Of this mystery more later.

Meanwhile the Dauphin, if he believed the Maid's word, was yet cautious, and very slow to act. There were consultations and discussions of pious matrons, of clerks and divines. Joan was lodged in the tower of Coudray at Chinon and waited, even as she had waited at Vaucouleurs. Louis de Contes, her fourteen-year-old page, often saw her praying fervently and weeping, for her heart grew sick with hope deferred, and she was on fire to go to the help of the beleaguered citizens of Orleans. She chafed at the delay, reproached the Dauphin gently and wistfully for holding so many and such long councils, and prophesied that her time would last but a year, and little more.

From the tower of Coudray the Maid was conducted to Poitiers, to the house of Jean Rabuteau, the Advocate-General, which house was called the House of the Rose, for here she was to undergo examination from the learned doctors of religion, with regard to her revelations and her mission. "Must I go to Poitiers?" she sighed. "In God's name I know I shall have trouble enough there; nevertheless, let us be going."

Great doctors of the Parlement of Poitiers examined Jeanne. Some of them were the Lord Bishop of Poitiers, Master Jean Lombard, doctor of theology, Master Gerard Machet, the King's confessor, Master Jean Erault, Master Simon Bonnet, Brother Seguin of Seguin, a Dominican, and Brother Pierre Seguin. They came in small parties to the House of the Rose and there questioned the Maid. She answered them boldly, having counsel from her Voices, but she was cruelly troubled and irked by the whole affair. Evidently she felt herself at a disadvantage, was irritated and uneasy, showing something of the impatient saint,

a little of the suspicious peasant, and a good deal of the petulant child.

When asked the capital question, "Why are you come? The King would know what made you come and seek him?" she answered indeed with a simplicity which seemed great to all those present:

"As I was keeping my flock a Voice called me. And the Voice said, 'God is full of pity for the people of France. Joan, you must arise and go into France.' Having heard these words I wept. Then the Voice said, 'Go to Vaucouleurs; you will find there a captain to bring you safely into France. Have no fear.' I did even as I was bid, and came to the King without hindrance."

Brother Guillaume Aimery then said: "If God wishes to deliver the people of France, why do you ask for men-at-arms, for they are not necessary?"

"In the name of God," said the Maid, "the men shall fight, and God will give the victory."

Another time when asked why she had come, the Maid answered with fire: "I have come from the King of Heaven to raise the siege of Orleans and to lead the King to Rheims for his anointing and his coronation."

This was very well, but when Master Pierre de Versailles rather long-windedly remarked what was certainly stale news, "We are sent to you by order of the King," Joan shrank ungraciously into her corner as she sat, and answered: "I know well enough you have come to question me. I know nothing; not my A B C." Brother Seguin of Seguin asked her: "Joan, what language do your Voices speak?" "A better language than yours," she answered promptly; a very palpable hit at the expense of Brother Seguin, who spoke, good man, with a broad Limousin accent. However, he persevered. "Do you believe in God?" "Indeed yes, and better than you,"

cried the Maid hotly. She was hurt to the quick ; to have her faith held in doubt was too much. Brother Seguin of Seguin had the reputation of being sour and severe. It is pleasant to note that though not unnaturally irritated at the moment, he bore the Maid no malice. After an examination which lasted for six weeks the learned doctors declared themselves satisfied.

Joan's maidenhood was then attested by a select committee of ladies, and finally, as the result of the entire proceedings, it was decided : that Joan had no evil in her, nor had she commerce with the Powers of Darkness. She was good, honest, pure, humble, pious, and simple. That concerning her birth and her life, they have told marvels which seem to be true. That she should be taken to Orleans according to her desire, and men-at-arms with her, lest in repulsing her the gifts of the Holy Spirit should also be repulsed.

In the month of April the Maid left Poitiers for Tours, where she was to receive armour and equipment for her adventure. Sixty-six years afterwards one told of her going that saw her go, and he showed, at the corner of the street called St. Stephen's, the stone on which she stood to reach her saddle. Lightly did her foot rest there, for she was very glad to be gone. The people called it "The Maid's Mounting Stone."

Disregarding for a moment the story of Joan's arms and victories, her leadership of hosts and her companionship with great captains, this study, for the sake of consistency, must confine itself to two or three incidents, which shall be related in order, and afterwards, to the discussion of a few facts, all relating to that part of the Maid's entirely wonderful achievement which is the least susceptible to rational explanation.

When Joan rode out to relieve Orleans there were many

priests in her company, and she caused them to be assembled round about her banner, and thus to march at the head of the army. So they went singing, "*Veni Creator Spiritus,*" and many other anthems, and came before Orleans on the third day, and halted on the banks of the Loire which flowed between them and the city. They had with them a convoy of cattle. When the Maid saw the river and knew also that the wind was blowing contrary, so that she and the army could not pass over, she was very bitterly displeased, for she had believed that she was being led straight to the gates of Orleans by a road upon the opposite bank. Dunois, who commanded in Orleans, had come to meet her, and to him she turned. She said, "Are you the Bastard of Orleans?"

"Yes," he answered courteously, "and I am very glad of your coming."

"Is it you who said I was to come on this side of the river, and that I should not go direct to the side where Talbot and the English are?"

"Yes, and those more wise than I are of the same opinion, for our greater success and safety."

"In God's name," cried the Maid, "the Council of my Lord is greater and wiser than yours. You thought to deceive me, and it is yourselves who are deceived, for I bring you better help than has ever come to any general or town whatsoever—the succour of the King of Heaven. This succour does not come from me, but from God Himself." When the Maid spoke and said, "I bring you good help . . .," in a moment the wind, which was strong and contrary, changed. To this Dunois himself bears witness. It became favourable. Then Dunois and the Maid crossed with two hundred lances (the rest of the army returned to Blois to cross the stream there, and come by way of the Beauce) and reached the other side in safety, the wind

being now so much in their favour that each boat there towed two others. "From that time I put good hope in her even more than before," said Dunois. Another witness says that Joan prophesied that the wind should change, that it was a "marvellous thing" and a "miracle of God."

The next incident to be recorded is concerning one Guy de Cailly, in whose house Joan passed the night at Reuilly, on the northern bank of the Loire, for she did not immediately enter Orleans. In a document (the authenticity of which is certainly open to doubt) it is said that this man shared one of the Maid's Visions, and with her beheld "three superior angels." This is the solitary suggestion of its kind that has been made in connexion with Joan's strange experiences. Considering the susceptible condition of the minds about her, and the powerful influence that she exercised over hosts of all sorts of people, the fact is somewhat curious, but it is indisputable. Beside this story of Guy de Cailly, must be set the testimony of Jean d'Aulon, who was steward of the Maid's household. He questioned her on one occasion about her Voices and her heavenly council. She told him that she had three counsellors, of whom one always remained with her. Another went away, but came often to visit her; and the third was he with whom the two others consulted. D'Aulon prayed and besought her that she would show him the council; but she said that he was not worthy or of sufficient virtue to see them. And at this he was silenced and could ask her no more of these things.

It is certain that before the 22nd April the Maid foretold that she would be wounded by an arrow, but that she should not die of this wound, for on the 22nd April this prediction was set down. On the 6th or 7th May, when she had seen heavy fighting and was about to see more, she spoke thus to Pasquerel, her confessor, as he says: "Rise to-morrow

morning even earlier than you did to-day ; do your best, keep always near me, for to-morrow I shall have much to do and much greater things ; to-morrow blood shall flow from my body above the breast." Accordingly on the next day, which was a Saturday, a little after the hour of noon, as the Maid stood on a scaling-ladder in the forefront of the assault, an arrow or a bolt pierced through the shoulder-plate of her armour, wounding her cruelly just above the right breast, and standing out a hand's breadth at the back. She gasped and fell, and some of her people carried her a little apart into a meadow. At this all the French were discouraged, but the English were very glad, because they believed that they had drawn blood from a witch, and thus broken her power of sorcery. Joan lay on the meadow grass while Brother Jean Pasquerel and Mugot, a page, bent anxiously over her. She was very much afraid, and wept piteously for terror and for pain. But after a little space her Voices came and comforted her.

Soldiers stood round, and being greatly distressed to see her suffer, some of them wished to "charm" her—that is, to sing a song or incantation over her wound, and thus to staunch the flow of blood, and to heal it. But this she would not have, and said, even in her pain, "I would rather die than do a thing which I know to be a sin. I know well that I must die one day, but I know not when, nor in what manner, nor on what day. If my wound may be healed without sin I shall be glad enough to be cured." Then they drew off part of her armour as gently as might be, and dressed the wound with olive-oil. After which the Maid confessed herself to Brother Jean Pasquerel, weeping and lamenting as she did so, for she was all unstrung. Nevertheless, before long she rose and armed herself and returned to the assault. But the sun went down and her men were weary and lost heart, and Dunois, the Captain of Orleans, said there was

no more hope of victory that day, therefore he bade them sound the retreat. But the Maid came to him and besought him to wait a very little time more.

Then she mounted her horse and rode away into a vineyard alone. There it is well to think that she prayed. The voices of her dear "Brothers of Paradise," inaudible in the crash and din of battle, might well come to her, borne upon the little evening airs. It was the sweetest time of the year, and the quietest of the day. The tender green leaves were opening on the vines. "She remained there about half-an-hour," says Dunois; "then returning, and seizing her banner by both hands, she placed herself on the edge of the trench. At the sight of her the English trembled and were seized with sudden fear; our people on the contrary took courage, and began to mount and assail the Boulevard, not meeting any resistance. Thus was the Boulevard taken, and the English therein killed or put to flight."

Some little time after the raising of the siege of Orleans, at the end of May, or in the beginning of June, the Dauphin held his Court at Loches. One day he held council there in his private room with the Sieur Christopher d'Harcourt, the Bishop of Castres, his confessor, and the Sieur de Trèves, Chancellor of France. To them entered Dunois and the Maid, first knocking at the door of the council-chamber. Joan immediately advanced to the Dauphin and knelt down at his feet, with her arms embracing his knees. Thus kneeling she besought him instantly in these words: "Noble Dauphin, hold no longer these many and long councils, but come quickly to Rheims to take the crown of which you are worthy." Then the Lord Christopher d'Harcourt asked her:

"Is it your Counsel who told you this?"

"Yes," she answered; "and my Counsel urges me to this most of all."

Then spoke the King's confessor thus: "Will you not

say here, in the presence of the King, what manner of Counsel it is that thus speaks to you ? ”

At this the Maid blushed and answered simply : “ I believe I understand what it is you wish to know and I will answer willingly.”

And the Dauphin said very kindly : “ Joan, are you indeed willing to speak of these things here ? ”

“ Yes, sire,” she answered. Then she said these words, or words like them : “ When I am discouraged because I am not believed readily in the things which I speak from God, I go alone and pray to God, complaining to him of unbelief. When my prayer is ended I hear a Voice which says to me, ‘ *Fille Dé, va, va, va ; Je serai a ton aide—va !* ’ (Daughter of God, go on, go on, go on ; I will be thy Help—go on !) And when I hear the Voice I am glad. I would I might always hear it thus.” And while she was speaking these words, Dunois records she was in a marvellous rapture, raising her eyes to heaven.

Certain examples have now been brought forward of the peculiar faculties possessed by Joan, the Maid. She has been seen (it may be put in this way) exercising the powers of telepathy, precognition, and clairvoyance. There yet remain examples of these faculties. Quicherat, one of Joan’s greatest historians, signalized, besides her prophecy of her wound at Orleans, her knowledge of the King’s secret, and her discovery of the buried sword at Fierbois. “ These,” he says, “ rest on bases of evidence so solid that we cannot reject them without rejecting the very foundation of the history. . . . I have no conclusion to draw. Whether science can find justification in the facts or not, the visions must be admitted, and the strange spiritual perceptions that issued from the visions. These peculiarities in the life of Jeanne seem to pass beyond the circle of human power.”¹

¹ Quicherat, *Appercus nouveaux sur Jeanne d’Arc.*

Concerning the famous mystic sword which the Maid carried into battle, although with it she slew no man, she herself spoke to her judges at Rouen, and over and above her account very little is known.

“ Whilst I was at Tours or at Chinon,” she says, “ I sent to seek for a sword which was in the Church of St. Catherine of Fierbois behind the altar. It was found there at once ; the sword was in the ground and rusty ; upon it were five crosses.” They asked her how she knew the sword was there, and she said : “ I knew it of my Voices. I had never seen the man who went to seek for it. I wrote to the priests of the place that it might please them to let me have the sword, and they sent it to me. I do not know exactly if it were before or behind the altar, but I believe I wrote saying it was at the back. As soon as it was found the priests of the church rubbed it, and the rust fell off without effort, at once. It was an armourer of Tours who went to look for it. The priests of Fierbois made me a present of a scabbard, the people of Tours of another ; one was of crimson velvet, the other of cloth of gold. I had a third made of leather, very strong. I always bore this sword of Fierbois from the time I had it, up to my departure from St. Denis, after the attack on Paris.”

The Clerk of La Rochelle, writing in 1429, says that the sword was in a chest inside the great altar of Fierbois. This chest had not been opened for twenty years or more. The people of the church found the sword and recognized it by the Maid’s description. She said, among other things, that it would have five crosses on its blade.

The ultimate fate of Joan’s Excalibur is curious. She says : “ When I was taken prisoner I had not got this sword. . . . I had one which had been taken on a Burgundian ; this sword I had from Lagny ” (where she was in the autumn of 1429) “ till Compiègne. . . . To tell what

became of the other sword" (that of Fierbois) "does not concern this case, and I will not answer about it now." It seems to be a matter of fact that the sword of Fierbois was broken by the Maid herself, when she was wrath, and with it chastised a woman of evil life who followed the camp, against her express orders. Thus even weapons mystic and wonderful are snapped at last, and bright things beloved of romance neither endure for ever, nor come to a glorious end, but perish and mingle with the common dust of ages.

It has been mentioned that when first the Maid had speech with the Dauphin Charles at Chinon, she told him something that inspired him with great gladness and confidence, something which in fact induced him to put faith in herself, and in her mission. Before Joan left Vaucouleurs her Voices promised her that when she reached Chinon she should be given a sign with which she would be able to convince the King. This sign she did receive and use effectively. A contemporary, Thomas Basin, Bishop of Lisieux, writes: "The Count of Dunois, who was very intimate with the King, told me the facts upon the King's own authority. The Maid confirmed her account by rehearsing to the King matters so secret and hidden that no mortal except himself could know them, save by Divine Revelation."¹ Other chronicles of the time qualify the secret matters, as something that Charles himself had thought or done, some vow lying between himself and God, or something of that sort, and Joan herself at Rouen admitted that they were connected with the Dauphin's "own doings." At last, in the "Mystery of the Siege of Orleans,"² the Dauphin makes a secret prayer, and Joan reminds him of it. Poor Dauphin Charles was the son of an infamous woman, Isabel of Bavaria. He was continually

¹ Basin, "History of Charles VII."

² A Mystery Play of uncertain date.

assailed, and not without reason, by doubts concerning his own legitimacy. Unhappy, unsuccessful, and harassed beyond description, and beyond endurance, he entered his oratory, and kneeling there quite alone he prayed to God, "uttering no words, but in his heart imploring God that if indeed he were the true heir of the blood of the noble house of France, and the kingdom rightfully his own, God would please to guard and defend him, or at least grant him grace to avoid death or captivity, and escape to Spain or Scotland, whose kings were, in all ages, brothers in arms and allies of the King of France; wherefore he had chosen them as his last refuge."¹

Joan came to Chinon upon this. She knew of the secret prayer and its circumstances. She assured the Dauphin positively of his perfect right to the crown of France. It was of course instantly desired to keep these things quiet during the King's lifetime. To reveal a monarch wrestling with doubts as to his own legitimacy would have been a fatal confession of weakness, nobody understood this better than the Maid herself. This is proved by her persistently reticent attitude¹ at her trial when questioned upon the subject of the "King's secret." The point came up again and again, for it was a favourite one with her judges. It is indeed a point of great importance, and it will receive further discussion in a subsequent study.

¹ Given in the *Hardiesse des grands Roise*, Pierre Sala (1516). Translation from "The Maid of France." A. Lang.

CHAPTER IV

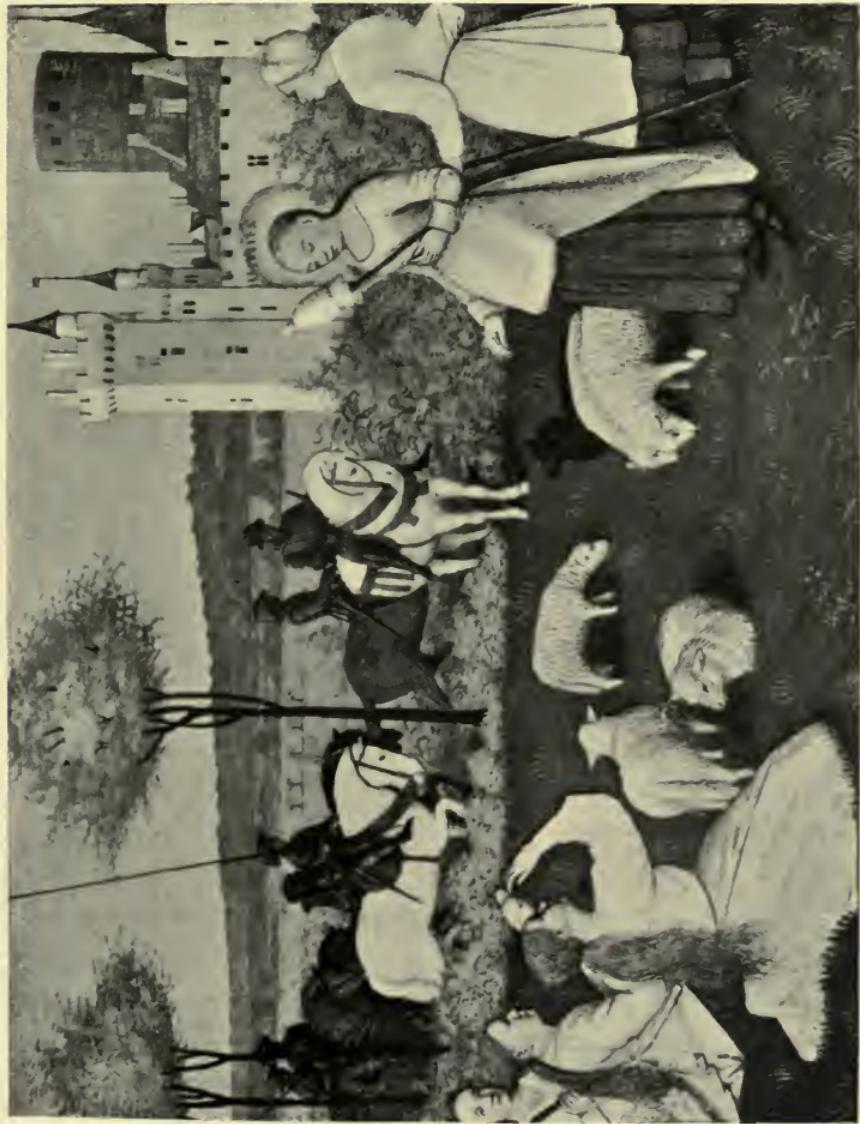
A CHAPTER ON RELIGIOUS ATMOSPHERE

JOAN OF ARC was visited by three saints from Paradise. The first was St. Michael, the Archangel who commands the armed hosts of heaven. He appeared early to the little Maid, and there were many angels in his company. She saw them clearly with her bodily eyes, and when they departed she was wont to weep and to wish that they would take her with them. The Angel Michael promised that other saints should follow him, and accordingly there appeared to Joan the Lady St. Catherine and the Lady St. Margaret. Afterwards she did not remember which of these came to her first. She distinguished them because they named each other, and also because of their manner of salutation. Her vision of these saints was delightful, but somewhat vague; it may be because of the bright radiance and glory that compassed them about. They were sweetly fragrant; they were tangible, for she was able to embrace them devoutly and with tears; they wore crowns, they spoke, and their voices were beautiful and low. Often they left the starry spheres and the company of the blessed to visit Domrémy by the murmuring Meuse. In the dewy meadows they left no print of their sacred feet, nor, as they trailed their clouds of glory, did they bend one blade of grass in Jacques d'Arc's orchard beneath the blossoming trees. There they held communion, mystical and exquisite, with a dark-haired child, who stood with wrapt eyes and tears upon her face. About them the leaves whispered, the white petals fell,

and the white river mist rose softly like a prayer. When the church bells rang out, the gracious and gentle ladies had no fear, but rather took a delight in the sound, and lingered upon earth to hear it, for they loved all things that were done to the glory of God.

Michael the Archangel was in Joan's time honoured and beloved above other saints. St. George, who slew the dragon, was continually invoked by the English, and, in the inexplicable nature of these things, seemed to have declared himself upon their side. In 1419 these enemies had taken the Abbey of St. Denis, where French kings lay buried. So the glory of St. Denis was somewhat dimmed for the moment, the great patron saint of France was lost to France for a time. Michael the Chief was well known to the Maid, for he was the patron saint of the Duchy of Bar. She had seen him represented by the crude art of her day, set up against a pillar in churches or chapels, in the guise of a valiant knight armed *cap-à-pie*, and having his helmet encircled by a crown. Sometimes he pierced with his lance the vanquished enemy of man, and sometimes he held scales for the weighing of souls, for he was the Angel of the Judgment. There was a chapel dedicated to him upon a hill near Toul in Lorraine, and the Abbey, built of old time by the Bishop of Avranches, and called *Mont-Saint-Michel-au-Péril-de-la-Mer*, remained a proud fortress, which had never yielded to the enemy. Thither pilgrims flocked by thousands whenever there was a lull in the din of battle, even boys of twelve and fifteen came across France to pray to the great saint in his chosen habitation. Those who defended the fortress had good fortune in war, and discomfited the English by land and by sea. The Dauphin Charles put great confidence in St. Michael, and ordered that the Archangel should be represented upon his standards. It is written in an account of his household, dated 1419: "Upon the said standards

ST. MARGARET AND HER FRIENDS
FROM A MINIATURE BY JEAN FOUQUET, ABOUT 1460, IN THE LOUVRE



there is a St. Michael fully armed and bearing a naked sword, making semblance of killing a serpent which is before him, and the said standard is marked with the device that my Lord carries." Simple people steadfastly believed that St. Michael led forth heavenly hosts to fight for their Charles in the French cause, and they comforted themselves, saying, in effect,

" . . . Why then if angels fight,
Base men must fall—for Heaven still guards the right."

Both in Brittany and in Poitu, after the relief of Orleans, the news was spread abroad that an armed knight had appeared in the air, riding upon a great white charger, and brandishing a naked sword, which was like a sword of fire ; over his harness he wore a robe of pure white. Many persons beheld him riding, and he passed above trees and houses. It is likely that in the loyal town of Vaucouleurs, and in the loyal village of Domrémy, men were not behindhand in honouring the Archangel, that his cult in these places was well known and well practised, and that the Maid Joan was intimately acquainted with it.

As for the Lady St. Margaret, her statue in stone, mutilated, and not beautiful, yet stands in the church of Domrémy. Before this crude presentment Joan knelt and prayed ; she hung fresh chaplets of flowers upon the cold stone, and lighted candles as often as she could afford. St. Margaret was greatly beloved in the kingdom of France, and in Champagne and Lorraine, as well as elsewhere. She succoured women in childbed, and peasants working in the fields were under her good protection. A casket containing relics of the saint was carried about the countryside in Joan's time for the edification of the faithful ; it is probable that the Maid both saw and touched it. She loved sacred legends, and knew the story of the blessed Margaret well, and something after this fashion. Margaret was born at Antioch. When a child she was

baptized secretly. Having attained her fifteenth year, she kept her foster-mother's sheep in the meadows. Olibrius the Governor passed by, and seeing her great beauty had her brought before him in his palace. When she told him that she was a Christian, Olibrius marvelled greatly that one so fair and noble should worship the Crucified. Margaret said, "My Lord Christ is not dead, but lives eternally." After this the Governor threw her into prison. On the morrow she was brought to trial, and the Governor pitied her because of her beauty, and would have persuaded her to bow down to his false gods. But she said she would rather die, as her Saviour also aforetime had died for her. Then was she bound and beaten with rods, her fair and virgin flesh was torn with hoops of iron, and her blood flowed like water from a fresh spring. All who saw it were afraid and wept, and Olibrius covered his face with his mantle; nevertheless, when he had removed her bonds he sent her back to prison. Here the Evil One tempted her, appearing first as a noisome dragon, and then taking the fair outside of a goodly man. Howbeit both times she overcame him and remained steadfast, refusing to worship the gods of the heathen. So her body was burnt with live torches, but she suffered no hurt. And lest all the people should be converted by this miracle, the Governor ordered her immediate execution. Margaret said to the executioner, "Brother, take thy sword and strike quickly." So he severed her head with one stroke, setting free her pure soul, which departed in the semblance of a snow-white dove.

At the village of Maxey, near to Domrémy, the parish church was dedicated to St. Catherine, and in this church the Maid often worshipped. Her elder sister, who, it seems, died young, though the exact time and manner of her death are unknown, was called Catherine, lending, for Joan, an added tender association to the name. In the sweet, long days of childhood the little Maid had gone many and

many a time with her sister Catherine to pray to Our Lady of Bermont, and to deck her shrine with flowers. Before going to Chinon, Joan bid farewell to her Aunt Aveline de Vouthon, who was expecting the birth of her child, and said : " If you should have a daughter, call her Catherine, because of my sister that is dead."

St. Catherine kept all young girls under her gracious protection, and especially serving-maids and spinners, and her story was well known at that time, and celebrated in prose and verse. She was born a princess, the daughter of King Costus and Sabina his Queen, and grew up beautiful, and mistress of all the liberal arts. She had many suitors, but would give her hand to none of them. Now it happened that while she slept, Our Lady appeared to her in her dreams. And the Virgin, holding her Divine Child in her arms, asked Catherine if she would take him for her Spouse. And whilst Catherine wondered, the Child opened his lips and said : " My mother, I have nought to do with this maid, she has neither part nor lot in Me. Howbeit, let her be baptized in My Name, and I will put My marriage-ring upon her finger."

Now Catherine desired to wed the King of Heaven, therefore she obtained baptism from a holy hermit, and afterwards remained constant in prayer and vigil until, in the solitude of her chamber, her Lord appeared to her with a great company of the happy saints and angels of Paradise. Then He took her hand and put His ring upon her finger. So she was joined to Him in a mystical union, and was satisfied. About this time, by order of the Emperor, there was made in Alexandria a great and solemn feast-day, with sacrifices to false gods. And when the hour came when they should offer up the sacrifice, Catherine stood upon the steps to the gate of the temple. And with a loud voice she bore witness to the one true God and His Blessed Son. The Emperor being angry, called together

fifty sages learned in ancient law and in the lore of Egypt and in science and in the arts, that they might confound her with hard questions, and humble her and her religion to the dust. And while Catherine feared that she might not be able worthily to defend the truth, Michael the Archangel appeared to her and gave her comfort and counsel. So she disputed with the doctors and overcame them, and all their subtle arguments could not trouble her. But in the end she convinced them one and all, so that they repented, and were converted and confessed Christ crucified. And the Emperor being in a great rage burnt all the fifty sages in the middle of the town. Catherine was beaten with rods and cast into a deep dungeon, but she was comforted by the visitation of angels, and a dove came to feed her with celestial food, and she remained steadfast and would not offer sacrifice to the false gods, nor yet deny her Lord. She said to the Emperor, her persecutor : " Do with me as you will, and do it quickly, that I may take my place with the virgins that are round about the throne of the Lamb." So she was led to a place without the city to her execution. And when the moment of her death was come there was heard a voice from the sky saying : " Come, My beloved spouse, for the gates of heaven are open for thee." So she suffered the mortal pang, and from the wound upon her pure and virgin body there flowed, not blood, but milk.

Such were the three gracious ones from heaven that visited the Maid of Domrémy. Such were their attributes and their qualities as they were known to all simple and pious persons of her time, as they appeared in song and legend, in homily and in mystery, in rude picture, and in sculpture. They admonished her in various ways, and amongst others laid this duty upon her : " Daughter of God, you must conduct your King to Rheims for his coronation." This command was of special significance. The

Maid's native village was called by the name of the blessed Remy, and her own church, where she knelt daily, was in his protection, who in his time had been a mighty saint indeed, sitting in the place of the bishops of Rheims, doing many a deed of charity, uttering many a prophecy, and working many a miracle of power. Upon his feast-day, every year, the good curé, as in duty bound, spoke of all his good and marvellous qualities, and told his story to the assembled people of Domrémy. And many times Joan the Maid heard it.

The birth of the most blessed Remy was miraculously announced by flights of angels, and from his earliest years he was renowned for his saintly exercises and austerities, and his edifying conversation. When only twenty-two years old he was elected Bishop of Rheims, the bishops of the Province being guided in their choice by a divine sign. In this capacity he baptized Clovis and Clothilda, the first Christian King and Queen of France. The ceremony was characterized by miraculous signs and portents. At high noon on the day before, the King and Queen and the good Bishop being together in a little chapel, all the place was filled with celestial brightness which dimmed the light of the sun, and a voice was heard saying, "Peace be with you—fear not; dwell in My love." Even when the light and the voice were no more, there remained a very sweet fragrance. Now when the moment of the King's baptism was come and all things were ready, the priest who bore the Holy *Chrême* could not approach the font because the crowd all about it was so great. Then the blessed Remy looked up to heaven and prayed. And immediately a white dove descended from heaven, bearing in its beak the *Sainte Ampoule*, filled with a heavenly liquid. The Bishop received it, and sprinkled the waters of the font. Then the white dove vanished. Now since that day the kings of France must be anointed with the blessed unction from heaven.

The *Sainte Ampoule* which holds it is kept in the church of St. Remy, in Rheims. And by God's grace it shall always be full. This is what all Domrémy knew and believed.

Something has now been said of the early religious environment of the Maid, of her innocent lore and stock of sacred legends, her church, her good and pious mother, and her curé. So far it has been of an extreme simplicity. But there is more, not so simple. It was pointed out in a former study that in the fifteenth century religion played a very great part in the emotional lives of the humblest of the people. This religion, so powerful, so universal, in what form was it imbibed by the Masses—how was it acquired? For it could not have been simply breathed in with the air, though for the matter of that, indeed, the air was full of it; neither did the people read it in books, for very few of them could read—the Maid herself, for one, knew not A from B; and besides, books were excessively scarce, each volume being written by hand, a process involving infinite labour. No, the medieval man having begun his religious life much as the modern man begins his, at his mother's knee, continued it in the same natural, unembarrassed, and familiar manner. His parish church, with its contents and its rituals, early became as well known to him as his kitchen, with its homely utensils and its daily routine. Sacred seasons of fasting or feasting came round just as obviously as the season for sowing and that of reaping, and were celebrated as unquestioningly. The attributes of the Deity and the characteristics of the saints were discussed as freely and as simply as the personality of a neighbour; there was an infinity of religious gossip, a type of conversation rarely heard in modern times. There were mystery plays acted. Thousands beheld the scheme of creation unrolled before their eyes. The tragedy of their first parents was so vividly presented to them that they could not but grasp its significance, and after this they saw the sublime drama

of the birth and life and passion of their Saviour. They shuddered and wept, and were cleansed by terror and pity. There were pilgrimages organized when poor people travelled light, upon their feet, to sacred shrines, where were kept sacred relics. At these religious picnics vast crowds assembled, burning with faith and devotion, quivering with excitement and the magnetic quality common to crowds, at once so useful and so dangerous. Sermons were preached and miracles were wrought, and the pilgrims, if indeed they survived the myriad dangers and privations of their journey, reached their homes highly edified, having acquired much merit. Those who did not stir from their native villages had their opportunities no less, for there were those who went about the country with relics of all the saints in the Calendar, which they duly exhibited for the satisfaction of the souls of the faithful. Also, through the length and breadth of Christendom, there went the Mendicant Friars, teaching and preaching various doctrines. Amongst these, the two principal orders were the Dominicans and the Franciscans.

The Dominicans were erudite, scholastic, masters of rhetoric and of theology, brilliant in argument. They sat in ecclesiastical tribunals, they governed in universities, they moved in kings' palaces. The Franciscans, with other characteristics and other ideals, shared to a far greater extent the common life of the people. They were above all things popular preachers. After a controversy upon a matter of doctrine, the Dominicans fell out of favour at the Court of France. However, the Duke of Burgundy and the princes of his blood continued to support them, and they became politically identified with the Burgundian cause. The French party, upon the other hand, put their trust, religiously speaking, in the Franciscans. The movement was led by Yolande of Aragon, mother-in-law of Charles VII., who loved the order and multiplied her benefactions in its behalf. About the year 1417, when Yolande

lived at Angers, the capital of Anjou, the Franciscan convent there became the centre of a great religious fervour. The Princess of Aragon and the great ladies of her Court sought to revive the wonders of Assisi by their works of charity, their gifts to the poor, their meditations, their mortifications, and their exercise of all the Christian virtues. A gentle lady, the blessed Jeanne Marie de Maillé, belonging to the third order of St. Francis, gave away all her worldly goods, practised severe austerity, and performed miracles. There was a recrudescence of the pure mysticism of St. Francis, which made itself felt in a thousand souls.

In the early years of the fifteenth century there lived a Dominican, a native of Catalogna, called Vincent Ferrier, who went about preaching the advent of Antichrist, and filling the people with horrible alarm. After his death, his parable was taken up by others of the Dominican order. These last journeyed through Northern Italy with a ragged crowd of disciples at their heels, causing despair and panic amongst the populations that heard them, for their fearful and morbid doctrine took all imaginations. It was whispered that the year 1403 had seen the birth of Antichrist, so year by year the horror grew, and minds were obsessed by the idea of his reign, the end of the world, and the day of judgment. Then there arose a Franciscan friar, Bernard of Sienna, and he spoke words of comfort, and taught the people a simple way to calm their boding terrors. He inculcated the adoration of the Holy Name of Jesus, and the worship of all outward signs and material representations of that Name. The Name was a talisman, a safeguard, a continual comfort, a symbol of protection, of love, and of salvation. The friar carried about him, wherever he went, a picture where the word "Jesus" was inscribed in letters of pure gold, with a halo of brightness round about it. This picture he showed to the faithful, that they might bend the knee and adore,

fixing their minds upon their Saviour's Name, and through this concentration acquiring the peace and the sense of wrapt security enjoyed by the Blessed. This doctrine, full of comfort and of mystical beauty, took hold upon a thousand hearts. Men clung to the saving power of their Redeemer's Name, and feared Antichrist no more. They praised the Name and worshipped it; they set it upon their house-fronts, together with that of Mary the Virgin Mother; they inscribed it upon jewelled amulets which they carried always; they raised the doctrine of Bernard of Sienna into a regular cult, which soon had its own ritual and its multitude of adepts, not merely in Italy, but in France, and indeed all over Europe, not merely amongst those vowed to the religious life, but in every class of society, high and low alike. It was possible, and it became usual for persons to affiliate themselves with the Franciscans in a peculiar way, by joining what was called the third order of St. Francis. It must be noted that this procedure was especially common in the valley of the Meuse, between Neufchâteau and Vaucouleurs, because in that region there were situated a number of Franciscan convents above the ordinary. Monsieur Simeon Luce, in an interesting study concerning the third order of St. Francis, has the following: "So great in this country was the prestige enjoyed by the friars, that the faithful of both sexes, of every age and of every condition, embraced with fervour the rule of the third order of St. Francis." To enter into this order, and to share its spiritual and temporal advantages, the only qualifications exacted were a profession of the Catholic Faith and obedience to the Church. The conjugal tie formed no obstacle, and any married woman could gain admittance as soon as she had received the express or tacit permission of her husband. Besides, not one of the prescriptions of the rule of the third order constrained, upon pain of mortal sin, the member who had vowed to embrace it. Parents

took vows on behalf of their children, these being of very tender years. A certain number of little ones of either sex, thus affiliated, were educated and brought up at the expense of the convents, the boys until they were fourteen or fifteen years old, the girls until they were twelve or thirteen. If at this age they decided to live the monastic life, they remained in the cloister, otherwise they returned to the world, dowered with a provision of money. It was the custom to call these wards of the convents the little children of the Mendicants, and it was in their company that Joan of Arc loved to receive the Sacrament. She informed Pasquerel, her confessor, to that effect.

The adepts of the third order of St. Francis wore emblems representing the monogram of the sacred Name. Often they recited the prayer which is called the Angelic Salutation; they kept, with very great piety and devotion, the anniversary of Our Lord's Passion, and also the feast of the Annunciation of the Virgin. They wore black or grey, and the women were obliged to dispense with the feminine beauty of long hair, and to wear theirs cut short *en rond*. Now the Clerk of La Rochelle, who was probably an eye-witness of the Maid's first interview with Charles VII. at Chinon, thus describes her appearance: "She had a black vest with hose attached to it, a short tunic of dark coarse grey, dark hair cut *en rond*, and a black cap upon her head." These details would in themselves be of no particular moment, but they become rather curious when added to other well-known facts. Joan of Arc had a standard made for herself before she marched to the relief of Orleans, and throughout her campaigns she had it continually borne into battle with her. Upon this banner were inscribed the names of *Jhesus Maria*. Also she had a ring in her possession, concerning which her judges questioned her at her trial. She said that her parents had given it to her as a present; on the ring was written *Jhesus*

Maria. When she sent letters of importance she had them headed *Jhesus Maria*. Twice she sent challenges to the English, once on the 22nd of March 1429, and once on the 5th of May. In the same year in June she wrote to the inhabitants of Tournay, in July she wrote from Rheims to Duke Philip of Burgundy; on the 22nd August she wrote an answer to the Count of Armagnac, and upon the 3rd of March 1430 she wrote a missive to the Hussites in condemnation of their heresies. Each and all of these documents are marked, whether at the head or at the foot, with the names *Jhesus Maria*. At Rouen, the Maid was questioned a good deal as to her motive in thus marking the letters that she wrote. She said that in doing this she had followed the advice of persons connected with her party, and she added that the clerks who wrote for her grew to do it upon their own initiative without consulting her. This is very well, but she gave no reason for the advice of the persons connected with her party, and it is certain, moreover, that no clerks had anything to do with the device upon her standard, or that upon her ring, *Jhesus Maria*. She did not wish to inform her judges further in the matter. But they chose to regard her use of sacred names and emblems upon profane documents as a thing highly suspicious, if not actually sacrilegious, and drew up an accusation against her accordingly. This is one of the twelve articles which were concocted by Cauchon and his wolves for the undoing of the Maid.

Now although *Jhesus Maria* was not used upon official documents except by Joan of Arc, it was very often written at the head of communications of a religious character. To write it thus was an ordinary practice of pious persons who were affiliated to the third order of St. Francis. Colette de Corbie, a mystic, whose arresting personality shall be remarked upon later, was a celebrated reformer of Franciscan convents in France during the late fourteenth

and early fifteenth centuries. Such of her correspondence as survives, whether it is addressed to convents, to religious bodies, or to private individuals, is headed *Jhesus Maria*, just as is that of the Maid. All these slight circumstances combine to make a frail fabric of evidence, possibly unsubstantial, probably unimportant, yet interesting if it adds another touch to the drawing of an elusive character, another detail to the conception of a remote time.

The Voices of Joan of Arc spoke and promised her many things. She promised one thing. She vowed her virginity as long as it should be God's pleasure. This she did as the result of no sort of constraint or suggestion, but of her own free will, and she did not keep her vow for fear of misfortunes to come, if she were to break it, this she assured her judges. It is necessary to say a word concerning this sacrifice upon the Maid's part before bringing to a close this brief chapter on the religious atmosphere in which she lived. Beside the cult of the all-powerful Name of the Redeemer, there flourished the cult of Mary, His Maiden Mother. All the tenderness of maternity, all the pure graces of maidenhood, all the poetry of womanhood—its love, its power, its patience, and its grief—these the devout mind of the fifteenth century expressed in its adoration of the Virgin their Lady, Queen of Heaven and Star of the Sea. By these names she was known, and by others as sweet and poetic. The Mystic Rose, the Gate of Heaven, the Well of Living Water, the Shining Jewel, and the Orchard Close.

At Domrémy the child Joan bowed her little dark head before "Our Lady of Bermont," and wove her fresh garlands of Saturdays. At Vaucouleurs she went often to the church on the hill, and called to the Mother of Christ, as she lay upon the cold stones and cried, and this devotion grew throughout her wonderful career. Joan's mother, with thousands of her countrymen and countrywomen,

went a pilgrimage to Puy in Velay to worship at the shrine of the famous "Black Virgin," which was full of virtue, and powerful to work miracles. This was in the year 1429 when the feast of the Annunciation fell upon Good Friday, making a great and solemn day. Isabel Romée knelt amongst the vast palpitating crowd. Small doubt that her heart was full. It was about the time when her child received armour and a horse to go to the relief of Orleans.

The reverence and worship duly rendered to the Virgin Mary was extended and paid to virginity as an abstract quality. The condition enjoyed considerable prestige, and the popular mind attributed all sorts of properties, privileges, and powers to the virgin state. This attitude of mind explains the importance attached to the physical examination to which the Maid was subjected three times during her career. The idea of these examinations is extremely repugnant to modern sensibility, but in the fifteenth century they were looked upon simply as the steps taken to establish a fact of the first religious and social importance. The power of virgin meekness and purity was a matter of religious belief. Prophets, martyrs, confessors, and virgins were revered together as types of Christian sanctity. A holy virgin could resist force with sweetness, and worst the powers of evil, making them of none effect. Romantic legends, such as that of Una and the lion, were everywhere current, and the Beastiaries set down this strange thing concerning the unicorn : "The unicorn in its nature partakes both of the horse and of the goat. It is as white as snow, and as spotless. A sharp sword stands out from its forehead like a horn. It has its dwelling in the deep woods ; it is fleet and wild, so that no huntsman can come near it, and whoever pursues it to slay it spends his labour in vain. Howbeit, if in the clearing of a wood the unicorn should come upon a young maid going her innocent ways alone, or resting upon the

moss, it stops in its race to obey her gentle bidding, softly laying its white head against her knees, rendering itself a willing captive, into the hands of a child." The respect felt for the virgin was very real, and showed itself in practical and occasionally in extremely curious forms, of which the following custom is an example. In many provinces of France when those condemned by the law were on their way to execution, they might at this eleventh hour be rescued from their doom by a maiden. If some pure young girl, seeing the sad procession go by, felt sublime compassion for the man about to die, she might publicly claim him, to have him for her husband. This was frequently done, and the claim was always considered valid, the order for the execution annulled, and a pardon obtained for the offender. This usage is certainly picturesque, and must have produced situations brimful of drama and romance, but the hard logic of it is a little difficult to discover.

The situation as regards Joan of Arc was this. She declared that she had vowed her virginity to God, and besides this, she claimed very unusual powers. If her first statement could be proved true, it would go far to establish the credibility of her second; for a virgin was a thing apart, a sacred creature, dowered with the gift of prophecy, bright, cold, and pure, clad in complete armour, immune from the most insidious darts of Satan.

CHAPTER V

MYSTICS AND VISIONARIES

JOAN OF ARC was by no manner of means the only person of her times who heard celestial voices and was visited by bright visions of blessed ones. She was not the only person who was privileged to talk with God, the only maiden who held a divine mission, who had the gift of prophecy, who was able to work miracles. On the contrary, if in every age there have existed persons dowered with mysterious qualities, possessing the power of concentration, the genius for meditation, the open ear, and the luminous eye that beholds far-off things ; if, afore-time, the Word of the Lord came to Noah, and Abraham walked and spoke with God, and if, in years not long passed, William Blake, who lived at Peckham, could see a causeway reaching from high heaven down to that spot, with winged angels going to and fro upon it, it is known that the conditions of life in the fifteenth century were peculiarly favourable to the production of such personalities. Existence was at once poetic and sordid ; high civilization and rank barbarism flourished side by side. There was great unrest ; there was great faith. Good and evil were extreme and distinct. There does not seem to have been the confusion or merging of values which is characteristic of the present day. Broad-mindedness had not been invented. Above everything, the influence of religion was paramount and all-pervading. The vivid and practical character of this influence it is difficult, but it is extremely necessary, to realize. Men heard Mass before

going upon a journey, or undertaking a dangerous enterprise, in the same spirit as they would now take out a life or accident insurance policy. They walked in fear of the recording angel, and attempted to evade his vigilance ; their attitude towards this functionary resembling what it would be to the policeman, if they lived to-day.

It will be understood how such an atmosphere might foster the intercourse of sensitive persons with the unseen. That it did so is proved by abundant evidence. The learned and ingenious historian, Monsieur Vallet de Viriville, was one of the first to point out this fact in connexion with the career of Joan of Arc. "The history and character of the Maid," he says, "are assuredly extraordinary, and altogether peculiar to this heroine. Nevertheless . . . a serious mistake would be made if, in this admirable figure, there was seen a person destitute of every sort of analogy with her precursors and her contemporaries. . . . I have discovered several visible ties which unite this illustrious woman, whilst in no way detracting from her greatness, with the *milieu* from which she sprang." Monsieur Vallet de Viriville goes on to mention a series of persons who, he thinks, form a group of which Joan was a member. The names of these persons are given here, because all of them, the Maid included, possess certain striking qualities in common.

The historian entitles his list :—

PRECURSORS AND IMITATORS OF THE MAID

Guillemette de la Rochelle, Counsellor of Charles V., who caused her to be brought to Paris, flourished before 1380.

St. Ermine, or the Blessed Hermine of Rheims, under Charles V. and Charles VI., born about 1340, died 25 August 1396.

SAN FRANCISCO
CALIFORNIA



REPUTED PORTRAIT OF JOAN OF ARC

FROM THE ORIGINAL, FORMERLY IN THE CHURCH OF ST. MAURICE, ORLÉANS, NOW IN THE
MUSÉE DU TROCADERO, PARIS

St. Jeanne-Marie de Maillé, born 1331, died 1414.

The Gasque of Avignon, Counsellor of Charles VI.

In the year 1413 the Carmelite Pavilly gathered together at Paris a political council in his cell or conventional chamber in the Place Maubert. He called there women and other persons famous amongst the pious contemplatives of the capital.

St. Brigit of Sweden, died in 1374. Her prophecies dealing with France were approved by the council of Constance, and her canonization confirmed in 1415.

St. Catherine of Sienna, died in 1380, canonized in 1460.

Catherine Sauve, the recluse of Montpellier, 1417, burnt by the Bishop of Maguelonne.

St. Vincent Ferrier, died in 1419, and Saint Bernard of Sienna, Brothers Richard, Jean de Gand, Thomas Covette, Didier, &c. &c., their disciples.

The Maid of Lyons (1424).

The Maid of Schiedam, in Holland.

The Maid of Rome.

Madame d'Or.

These last two are mentioned in the script of the trial of Joan of Arc.

The false Maids of France : Catherine de la Rochelle, Pieronne, Brigit, penitents of Brother Richard.

Guillaume, the Shepherd.

The false Maid Claude, married to Robert des Armoises (1436-41).

St. Colette (1380-1446).

Jeanne la Feronne, the Maid of Mans (1459-61).

Now these persons are united, by the fact that all of them purported to have especial revelations from God. Standing upon this common ground they may be compared with the Maid, which comparison may yield points

of interest ; but it is the study of how Joan differed from these visionaries of her time, not how she resembled them, that is really illuminating. In contrasting her with those who were in a sense nearest to her, the originality of her genius gains in a startling degree. The precursors and the imitators of Shakespeare are studied with eager interest, but can anything in them explain or classify the supreme quality of the master ? It does not really help matters to say that Shakespeare was one of a group, that he was an Elizabethan dramatist. The real point is that he was very different from all other Elizabethan dramatists. So in the case of Joan of Arc, very little is gained by calling her a fifteenth-century visionary ; it is infinitely more profitable to observe how widely she diverged from the type. With this end in view, it is proposed to select two or three of the more distinguished characters from the list quoted above, and briefly, to discuss their personalities and their achievements, in relation to the personality and the achievements of the Maid.

To speak, in the first place, of St. Colette of Corbie, who was born as early as 1380 and died in 1446. She was an extremely notable and interesting person in her own way, one of the most fervently religious, spiritual, and at the same time, active and capable woman of her day. She was born at Corbie, the daughter of a carpenter, Robert Boilet, and in her twenty-sixth year was already recognized by the Pope Benedict XIII. as a reformer, of the religious order of the daughters of St. Claire. During her lifetime she founded eighteen new convents, in addition to those where she introduced her reforms, and, according to an old chronicler, she built three hundred and eighty churches. She taught her reforms to monks as well as to nuns, and travelled over the country, from end to end, never tiring in her efforts to establish, in all its primitive purity, the rule of the Blessed St. Francis. She inspired men and

women of all conditions with an almost incredible enthusiasm, for her personality was dowered with something of the power, the sweetness, and the ineffable charm of the dear founder of the seraphic order. She embraced poverty as the Christian ideal, she delighted in it, and the thought of its austere beauty and its power possessed her like a fire. She spoke of it with trembling lips ; her low voice breaking the stillness of the quiet convent air, and vibrating in the hearts of pale nuns who sat at her feet. The blessed Colette spoke, but few were her inspired words, for her frail body could not support her burning soul, and she would sink into a swooning ecstasy, her face wet with abundant tears, and so remain. And the pale nuns at her feet bent their heads over their beads and prayed.

The blessed Colette was diligent in fasting and in mortifying the flesh, but though her eyes were so often lifted up to heaven, she was yet aware of the sweet, humble things of God's earth, and of the gentle beasts and birds. To lambs and turtle-doves she was tender like a sister. She herself had a snow-white lamb that would follow her even to the sacred precincts of the Lord's house, where she taught it innocently to kneel down at the Consecration of the Holy Elements. If she heard the lark sing in the springtime her soul was lifted, even up to heaven, by the influence of his sweet singing. If she rode abroad the light, rhythmic tread of her palfrey, through her sensitive ear, so influenced her sensitive organism as to afford her indescribable ecstasy, when she seemed to float in a clear atmosphere almost untrammelled by earthly limitations.

Her fame was great throughout the country. Marvelous legends were told of her. It was said that she had the gift of tongues, that she knew the future, that she could work miracles of healing and put the Evil One to flight. She brought back to life two children who had died unbaptized. This was in the town of Besançon. One was a

girl who received the name of Colette, and lived to embrace the religious life as a holy nun ; the other was a boy child, who had been for two days both dead and buried. Through the intercession of the blessed Colette he regained life that he might be numbered with the elect, but soon laid his burden down, for he died at six months old, poor little pilgrim.

The wondrous doings of St. Colette ere long brought her wondrous fame. She was feared by the great ones of the earth, who came from far and near to consult her like an oracle, and who right humbly took to heart her words of wisdom. In all her travels through lands of ill-repute, outlaw infested, none dared to lay a finger upon her sacred person. The timid, and those who went in danger of death from their enemies, put themselves under her protection and journeyed under her safe-conduct. Though she went barefoot and in rags, all coveted the honour of being her friend. The Duchess of Burgundy, the wife of John called the Fearless, the Duchess of Bourbon, and the King of Hungary, all received her gladly, and hung upon her teaching, and helped her with generous benefactions.

It will be seen that Colette had her friends both among the Armagnac, or French party, and in the Burgundian camp. In this connexion her position was important and extremely delicate. It was necessary for her to tread warily through the maze of Court and political intrigue, dense enough to confuse the pure mind of a saint, and bloody and vile enough to smirch the white of her robe. There is evidence to show that she acquitted herself well and uprightly, being a Holy Person of quite remarkable tact. She had a knowledge of human nature too, and a modicum of shrewdness which stood her in good stead, so that she prospered even the worldly matters with which she had to deal, and presents to the admiring ages the rare spectacle of an idealist highly successful in action.

In the month of November 1429, Joan of Arc was engaged in a campaign which included the beleaguering of Saint-Pierre-le-Moutier and La Charité-sur-Loire. On November the 9th she was at Moulins, a town in that neighbourhood, and Colette de Corbie was there at that same time, in a convent of the order of St. Claire, which she had founded. It is more than probable that the two met, and there is something infinitely touching in the idea that they did so. What words had the wandering ascetic, the holy woman, middle-aged, worn out with fearful austerities, versed in the ways of the hard world—what words had she for the ears of Joan, the child in armour? As they gazed at one another with bright vision-seeing eyes, did one see the heavy shadows gathered about the other's path, did she behold thus soon the martyr's crown set upon the young dark head with hair cut *en rond*?

Joan of Arc and Colette Boilet both lived in especial adoration of the most Blessed Name of their Lord. They brooded upon the words *Jhesus Maria*; they took them in some sort for their cognizance, and set them down at the beginning of what they might write. It is recorded that Colette worked many miracles simply by invocation of the Name, that she cast out devils and cured sickness. The Maid wrote *Jhesus* upon her standard, upon the mystic ring that she wore. What is more, she bore it written upon her heart. She believed that her Lord Christ was the true King of France, that Charles was his true lieutenant, that the enemies of France were the enemies of Heaven. Believing this, she waged a holy war. Her soldiers must needs confess themselves and be purged of their sins before going into battle. On the march there went with her a company of priests, under their own banner, upon which was displayed a presentment of Christ crucified, singing spiritual songs as they went.

Other things these two had in common. Both were beautiful, with a beauty that put to flight all evil desire. So pure they were that a scent mysteriously sweet seemed to float about them continually, the miraculous odour of sanctity. They both possessed the faculty of ready tears. The Blessed Colette at times remained in ecstasy with the tears rolling down her cheeks. When the Maid confessed herself or received her Lord's Body she wept many tears, on hearing her Voices she wept again ; and standing in the cathedral to see the crowning of her King, and the consummation of her dearest hopes, she wept abundantly. But these women—so fervent, sensitive, and gentle-hearted—lacked nothing of endurance and the power of action. One of them accomplished in a year that which the swords of twenty valiant captains could by no means do, and the other founded eighteen convents, and gave a new impulse to woman's piety throughout the kingdom of France. With Colette and with Joan, certain religious seasons were especially honoured ; these were the Annunciation, the Passion of our Lord, and All Saints' Day. They both loved beasts and birds. Sweet white doves were Colette's favourites, and Joan had doves painted upon her own standard. They both loved children. The Maid's most innocent pleasure was to receive the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in the company of the "little children of the poor friars." The Blessed Colette was wont to stop upon her road to speak to little girls that played, and to take part in their play, loving with all her heart these tender, artless souls, of whose like is made up the Kingdom of Heaven. Both were pure as snow, both were ardent as fire, both had the power of prayer, both had the ecstatic vision. Nevertheless in some things they differed essentially. Joan was simple and direct. She had a message and received it ; she had a command, and all her energies were bent to do one thing. To obey minor rules, the strict observance of lesser feasts, the airs and

graces, the embroideries of religion, with her were all secondary matters. The Blessed Colette, on the other hand, was highly complex. She was introspective to a degree. She mortified her body. The Maid was temperate, but the nun was ascetic. She lived by rule, she was constant in minute observances, she kept strictly to the letter of religious law, and within the safe fold of Mother Church. She lived the life of the typical medieval mystic—beautiful, poetic and limited. Her eyes were fixed upon the heavens; her faculties devoted to the contemplation of her Creator. The many wants and miseries of the world became faint, and appealed less and less to her sympathy. She grew less human. Writing to the nuns who lived under her direction, she recommended love of God, prayer, poverty, humility, patience, silence, meditation and obedience—nothing more. God knows it was not enough. There is something enervating in this luxury of devotion, something selfish in this careful nursing of the soul, something insidiously weakening in the high-walled convent garden, with its serene sunshine and its sacred shades, its broad paths, convenient for walking and praying at once, where the hooded nun may go wrapt in thought, and never note the painful fluttering of a bird dropped too early from the nest, or the flowers sadly drooping for want of a little water.

The Maid was not of this sort. She would never have made a nun. In the cloister she would have pined and died. In spite of her child's heart, in spite of all her piety and her visions, she was a leader and a fighter, chafing under enforced quiet, born for action.

Brother Richard was a mystic, of probably less exalted type than the Blessed Colette. There seems to have been about him a feverishness of temperament, a want of stability. He fought somewhat as one that beateth the air. Nevertheless he was in his way a genuine power and influenced all

sorts of people. Also he came into direct contact with the Maid.

Brother Richard was a Franciscan friar. He travelled about the country preaching in the open air. He was a born orator and attracted vast crowds, first in the dioceses of Troyes and of Chalôns, and then in Paris itself. He preached a doctrine, apparently evolved by himself, which borrowed tenets at once from the Dominican doctrine of the coming of Antichrist, and the Franciscan cult of the Sacred Name of Jesus. He told the appalled and eager people that he had been to Jerusalem, where holy men of his order guarded Christ's grave. From there, he said he had seen Jews make pilgrimages to Babylon, where Antichrist most assuredly reigned. Presently, said good Brother Richard, Antichrist would seek to enlarge his kingdom. Then all people and all nations should tremble and be horribly afraid, for then should come the last trump and the end of the world, and after that the Judgment; all this most inexorably. He thundered, he appealed, he sobbed, he prayed, he convinced. The poor Parisians shook in their shoes, muttered and gasped as their flesh crept and, with the eye of faith, they beheld the long dead arise, grey-faced and shrouded, from their graves, and the heavenly bodies reel in their appointed places, as they heard the dread voice of the Judge, and the horrid shrieks of the damned. Then, when his audience was rocked by emotion like standing corn in the wind, Brother Richard yearned over them, and pointed out their straight way of salvation. He commended to them the adoration of the Name of Jesus as their one infallible safeguard. They had leaden medals struck which bore monograms of the letters I.H.S., and they carried them always for talismans. During the three weeks or thereabouts that he was in Paris, Brother Richard delivered ten impassioned sermons, some of them from the pulpits of churches, and some from a

platform set up in the churchyard of the Innocents. He would begin at five o'clock in the morning, and continue till eleven, or till midday, and multitudes of five and six thousand heard him. They gave so much heed to his words, and so keenly took to heart his fierce condemnation of vanity, luxury, vice, and gambling that men and women rushed incontinently for braziers, which they set up in the streets, and into them flung dice and cards, and playing-boards and balls, and games of chance, rich head-dresses, crowns, and veils, hoods finely embroidered, and jewels—then stood by to watch the holocaust with hearts a little eased. Paris was in a ferment. The powers at length took note of the turbulent friar that so stirred up the people, and Brother Richard, finding himself in some danger, made good his escape. At his departure those of his following lifted up their voices and wept, “as if they had seen their best friend laid in the earth,” says the Bourgeois of Paris, who notes these things in his journal.

When Brother Richard left Paris it is probable that he made his way westward and southward. Certainly he was in the city of Troyes two months after this, in July 1429, when the Maid, in the course of her victorious campaign, appeared under the walls of that city. The people of Troyes were acquainted with Brother Richard. In Advent of the year 1428, he had been with them and had given them a strange saying. He cried: “Sow, sow, good people—sow a great and ample harvest of beans; for he that is to come will come quickly.” And thus the people interpreted the saying, that they were to sow the seed of good deeds which alone could save them upon the Judgment Day. Howbeit they did sow beans all round about the town, and when the Maid and the Dauphin were before Troyes the army subsisted upon an abundant bean harvest. Therefore some believe that the good Brother was a patriot and a politician.

He came to meet Joan outside Troyes, and seeing her, knelt down before her; but she would not suffer it, and raised him up, and humbly knelt herself before the holy man, and afterwards the two spoke long and earnestly together. Then Brother Richard entered the town, and went up and down the streets exhorting the people, and bidding them to resist the Maid no more, for she was of God, but to open their gates to her and to their King. He said, with other things, that Joan was cognizant of the secrets of God more than any other saint, excepting St. John the Evangelist, and that she was able, if she would, to lift herself into the air with all her army and so fly into the city. The friar's eloquence was successful, for Troyes town opened its gates, and all the people cried, "God save King Charles! Long live the King!" Back went Brother Richard to the camp next day, and took with him of the notable persons of the town. The friar advanced alone to meet the Maid, the rest following at a respectful distance. Joan stood her ground; she was irritated and resentful at the friar's exaggerated and absurd account of her powers. The citizens of Troyes did not dare to approach—they had heard too much of one thing or another about the Maid. They knew not if she was a witch who worked charms with a mandrake, or a miraculous saint of God, only second to St. John the Evangelist. In either case they were horribly afraid of her. To reassure them, Brother Richard threw holy water upon her and made the sign of the cross more than once.

"Advance boldly," said the Maid a little scornfully.
"Advance; I shall not fly away."

After the submission of Troyes, Brother Richard joined Joan's household and accompanied her upon her expeditions. Often he heard the Maid in confession, and administered to her the Sacrament. In all the towns that she passed through he preached to the people, and told them how

that the Maid was sent by God to turn the English foe out of France, and to inaugurate the reign of her rightful King. But Brother Richard had not the single-mindedness, the faith, and the patience to serve the Maid long and truly. He was turbulent, hot-headed, restless, and managing ; a lover of noisy effect and novelty. He gathered about him a group of women, some mystics, some merely hysterical. They followed him and the army and he endeavoured to exploit them, to make capital out of their hallucinations. He was very interfering, very credulous, very enthusiastic, part charlatan, and part innocent marplot. Amongst his mystics were certain women from Brittany, notably La Pieronne, who was blest with visions of the Almighty dressed in a long white robe and a cloak of scarlet. Another was a married lady, the notorious Catherine de la Rochelle. Concerning this lady and her pretensions, Joan gave evidence at Rouen.

"Have you ever seen or known Catherine de la Rochelle ?" asked one of the Maid's judges.

"Yes, at Jargeau, and at Montfaucon in Berry."

"Did not Catherine show you a lady robed in white, who she said sometimes appeared to her ?"

To which Joan uncompromisingly answered, "No."

"What did this Catherine say to you ?"

"That a white lady came to her dressed in cloth of gold, who told her to go through the good cities with heralds and trumpets, which the King would give to her, and proclaim that any one who had gold, silver, or any concealed treasure should bring it immediately ; that those who did not do so, and had anything hidden, she would know, and would be able to discover the treasure. With these treasures, she told me she would pay my men-at-arms. I told Catherine that she should return to her husband, and look after her home and bring up her children. And in order to have some certainty as to her mission I spoke of it

either to St. Margaret or to St. Catherine, who told me that the mission of this Catherine was mere folly, and nothing else. I wrote to the King as to what he should do about it, and when I afterwards went to him I told him that this mission of Catherine was only folly, and nothing more. Nevertheless Brother Richard wished to set her to work ; therefore they were both displeased with me, Brother Richard and she " (perhaps not unnaturally).

" Did you ever speak with the said Catherine on the project of going to La Charité-sur-Loire ? "

" She did not advise me to go there ; it was too cold, and she would not go. She told me she wished to visit the Duke of Burgundy in order to make peace. I told her it seemed to me that peace would be found only at the end of the lance. I asked her if this white lady that appeared to her came to her every night, and I said that to see her I would sleep one night with her in the same bed. I went to bed—I watched till midnight ; I saw nothing, and then went to sleep. When morning came I asked her if the white lady had come. ' Yes, Joan,' she answered. ' While you were asleep she came, and I could not awaken you.' Then I asked her if she would come again the following night. ' Yes,' she told me. For this reason I slept by day that I might be able to watch the night following. I went to bed with Catherine, watched all the night following, but I saw nothing, although I asked her often, ' Will she never come ? ' And she always answered me, ' Yes, in a moment.' "

Reading between the lines of this evidence, the student is instructed in many particulars. In the first place, it throws a sidelight upon contemporary manners in regard to the treatment of visionaries, mystics, miracle-workers, and inspired persons in general. It reveals the extremely practical spirit which existed side by side with the idealism of the Middle Ages. A woman had declared that, sent

from God, she was able to lead armies to victory. She had made good her claim. Here was another offering to discover hidden treasure, a type of service always pleasing, and at the moment especially appropriate. Brother Richard, really a tedious old fool, was charmed. The matter was given consideration. The King and his counsellors pondered. Should the thing be given the necessary publicity, and Catherine have her chance? Brother Richard was doubtless aching to begin. Catherine, as the event proved, was an utterly ineffectual sort of person. Even with Brother Richard at her back, she never discovered the most insignificant groat to enrich the royal coffers; she never visited the Duke of Burgundy, or gained peace for France for a single hour. Her character was shallow, peevish, vindictive, and self-indulgent. If she saw one white lady, or half-a-dozen, of what avail was it to any soul under the sun? It is worth no one's while to inquire whether she was a deliberate impostor, or sincere as far as she went. She went such a very short way.

"They were both displeased with me—Brother Richard and she," said the poor Maid. And it is better to think that she should have been subjected to the displeasure of such as they, than that she should have had to cope with fraud and charlatanism and religious intrigue, that her powers should run the risk of being cheapened by association with trickery or with feebleness of mind, her brightness tarnished, or her purity smirched. Heaven knows if Joan came through the ordeal well, keeping innocency. It is impossible not to wish that she had kept silence with regard to Catherine. Perhaps this dignity was denied her. However it may be, she passed severe judgment, and occasion thereby has been given for the wicked to blaspheme. There was, and there has been since, most unjust talk of the Maid's jealousy with regard to her would-be colleague, and those whom she considered her rivals, of

egoistic intolerance and pride of place and religious arrogance. These allegations are not worthy of examination.

Yet one circumstance is curious. The Maid certainly seems to have intended to prove the Lady Catherine's visions by the evidence of her own eyesight. She watched at night for Catherine's white lady, expecting to see her if she came and so prove her reality. Yet no one had ever seen Joan's blessed saints except Joan herself, and they were none the less real and credible for that. Logic is not strongly developed in the saintly character.

On those two nights what a strange sight for the moon, if it shone, pale and slanting, into Dame Catherine's chamber! The Maid lying awake, stern, young, and terrible, her dark head on Catherine's pillow, watching while the slow, cold hours dragged by till dawn; the Lady of La Rochelle awake too and restless—defiant, ill at ease, passionately desiring the day. "Will she never come?" says the Maid, often. And the wretched lady answers, "Yes, in a moment—in a moment." Catherine de la Rochelle nursed a bitter resentment against Joan, in connexion with whose trial she was examined officially in Paris. She told her examiners that the Maid was under the protection of Satan, and so laid a faggot to the stake of Rouen.

When the Maid fell into the hands of her enemies at Compiègne, Charles her King and his counsellors made no effort for her ransom or rescue, and are thereby for ever dishonoured. They were, or they declared themselves to be, busy with a new envoy from heaven. This time it was a shepherd boy from Gevaudan, called Guillaume. He had been accustomed to tend his flocks upon his native hills, where God had favoured him with revelations concerning the King and the kingdom of France. Praying in the cavern of a holy hermit, in the mountains, he heard a voice, and obeying it, came to Mande, where pious folk

helped him upon his way, so that he was able to come before Charles (as it seems, in the very nick of time) and say : " My lord, send me forth with your people, and your enemies shall be discomfited."

The King, indolently good-natured, received the boy kindly. It seems that physically he was but a poor thing, worn with emotional piety, rigours, and fervours. He bore stigmata upon his body after the manner of the Blessed St. Francis. His hands and his feet and his side were wounded, and bled for all to see. Many did see, and were edified. When questioned concerning the Maid, it is recorded that he said : " God has suffered that Joan should be taken because of the pride that there was in her, and because of her delight in fine raiment, and because she did not fulfil God's commands, but would do her own will." This sick child they hailed as a new deliverer, mounted him upon a horse and brought him to the army, where they kept him for a time, exploiting his infirmities. The poor little shepherd accomplished nothing, and was finally taken by the English, and by them drowned without trial. History knows him only by the bright light that the Maid sheds about her, and affords one moment of pity for his slight inconspicuous shade.

When Joan the Maid was burnt at Rouen, the executioner there drew aside the faggots, so that all the world might behold her poor, disfigured body, and know that indeed her soul had left it. Nevertheless, no sooner was the fire fairly out, than folk began to doubt and to whisper. Princes and great ones forgot Joan, and went about their business and their pleasure as if she had never been, but the people of France, for whom she had fought and died, remembered ; their imaginations remained captive to the charm and power of her personality. A mystery and a legend took shape. One chronicler wrote : " There were many persons who believed firmly that by her sanctity

she escaped from the fire, and that they burned another, thinking that it was she." A second has : " Finally they burned her in public, or another woman like her, about which divers persons have been and are still of different opinions." So the belief grew that the Maid was not dead, but would reappear in her own good time to perform more wonders. Thus she shared the legend of King Arthur, Barbarossa, and many beloved heroes.

The times being ripe, there was not lacking an ambitious spirit, anxious to profit by the opportunities presented. In the month of May 1436 there appeared at a place called La Grange-aux-Ormes, near Metz, a young woman calling herself the " Maid of France," and asking to speak with various lords of the town who happened to be there. Who she was, where she came from, and who brought her, these things remain unknown, but it seems that her real name was Claude. She appeared to be about twenty-five years of age, was strong and of a brown complexion, tall, and in man's dress, as had been the real Joan of Arc. Some gentlemen who had been at King Charles VII.'s coronation thought they recognized her, and furnished her with a good horse, with hose, a cap, and a sword. She rode the horse bravely, and spoke bravely the while, and if she did little or nought, she said that her power would not be given to her afresh until the day of St. John.

Now comes the most remarkable part of the whole story. Joan of Arc's two brothers (who had been ennobled and taken the name of Du Lys), Petit Jean and Pierre, the one a knight and the other a squire, these believed their sister to have been burnt at Rouen. Being told of her reappearance, they hurried to La Grange-aux-Ormes. They and the new Maid met face to face. That she should have at once recognized them is perhaps not so very surprising ; but that they should have recognized her, and acknowledged her as their very sister Joan, is a fact that defies all explana-

tion. At the end of the month the false Maid journeyed to Arlon in the Duchy of Luxembourg, where she was very favourably received by the Duchess Elizabeth of Gorlitz. Ulrich, the young Count of Würtemberg, impressed by her charms, constituted himself her protector; he gave her a magnificent suit of armour, and took her with him to Cologne. Thus began her very curious career.

The young woman who, at the outset, perhaps impersonated the Maid plausibly enough, soon had her head turned by public attention, and grew incautious in consequence. She sought the companionship of squires and men-at-arms, dancing with them freely, and eating and drinking more than was seemly in a woman. She excited wonder by performing a series of conjuring tricks, amongst which was the tearing in sunder of a handkerchief, and then reuniting the pieces, the cracking of a glass vessel thrown against the wall, and its restoration. Finally, she was brought to the notice of one Kalt-Eysen, an inquisitor, and tried for the practice of black magic. She was condemned and excommunicated, but was saved from prison by the Count, her protector, and hurried back to Arlon. Here she took the somewhat singular step of marrying a knight, Messire Robert des Armoises, and was called from that time "*Jehanne des Armoises*," thus at least ceasing to drag the sweet name of Joan of Arc through the mire. She proceeded to lead a violent and disorderly existence, still intermittently keeping up the fiction that she was the resuscitated Maid of France. She travelled about the country, gave her opinion upon ecclesiastical controversies, joined pillaging expeditions, and fought in small skirmishes. She succeeded in imposing upon a good many persons, including a number of the citizens of Orleans, who entertained her at a banquet. She did not do so well in Paris. The members of the University questioned and exposed her unmercifully. She was preached at in public for her

immorality and her violence, and the listening citizens pointed at her the finger of scorn. After this her star continued little longer in the ascendant. She sank, and was drawn down into an under-world sordid and obscure, leaving scarce a trace of the way she went. But before her final disappearance, if Pierre Sala, the chronicler, is to be believed, she had an interview with Charles VII. both picturesque and pitiful.

Having friends even about the King's person, she took pains to advise herself exactly of his appearance, so that she should suffer no discomfiture if the King should try her after the manner in which he had tried Joan of Arc. And this, it seems, he had the intention to do. At the time fixed for the audience he was in a garden, and retired into the deep shade of a trellis, whilst one of his gentlemen went forward to greet the lady. But she, being warned, passed this one by, and went forward, there is little doubt with a fast-beating heart, to where Charles stood. He saluted her with courtesy and said : "Welcome, dear Maid, in God's name, who knows the secret that is between you and me." Now she, knowing no secret at all, was confused and afraid, and deemed herself lost. Suddenly she fell upon her knees weeping, and confessing all her deception, and begging for pardon. And she went out from the King's presence, hanging her head and in great bitterness of spirit.

CHAPTER VI

BLACK MAGIC

THE many modern controversies which have raged, and which continue to rage about the character and mission of Joan of Arc centre round a single contended question. Was the Maid a simple peasant child, and her remarkable history a result either of her singular resources of mind, or of the secret influence brought to bear upon her by persons and in a manner unknown to history, or was she inspired, prepared for the doing of great things, and aided in carrying them out, by a power of supernatural, or in any case of very unusual quality? The question takes various forms, shifting with the differing religious views, and taking new aspects according to the trend of thought at the moment, but one of its elements remains for ever stable. The choice lies not between good and bad, but between good and a higher good, not easily comprehended; not between benign power and evil power, but between power ordinarily met with in the world and power extraordinary.

In the Maid's own time, controversy concerning her personality was naturally still more acute than it has been in modern days. Dealing as it did with matters of life and death, and the making and unmaking of nations, it gained in liveliness what it may have lost in calm judgment, or in literary or scientific quality. But it was then a topic discussed upon quite other premises. No doubt appears to have been entertained either by her friends or by her enemies, of the Maid's supernatural powers. The burning

question was, did those powers come from heaven or from hell? Was Joan of Domrémy an emissary from God, or a limb of Satan? Did she hold communion with the saints, or did she traffic with the Prince of Darkness? Such were the questions propounded, in some cases considered sincerely enough.

This distinction in the points at issue explains in some degree the difference in attitude towards her, of Joan's own world compared with that of the world to-day. The fifteenth century with its brilliance and its gloom, with its love of extremes, its credulities, its taste for the marvellous, would have either an angel or a demon. The Rouen crowd piously rejoiced over the end of a heretic witch, as in duty bound; or crossed themselves for fear, and murmured, with the remorseful English soldier, "We have burnt a saint." No one exclaimed, with simple humanity, "We have murdered a child."

Society in France was quick to think evil where there was none, and so terrified by the phantom of that evil that it had no power to see or follow after the good. But it had its excuse. It had been harassed and torn by a hundred years of intermittent warfare with England; it had suffered divisions and dangers and deprivations, fire and famine, and every horror of civil strife. There was no order nor peace nor leisure, nor any kind of safety for person or property. Life was carried on from moment to moment with the wolf literally at the door, even in Paris, and a hundred other forms of death no further off than the next street-corner.

The Church, that enormously powerful institution of the Middle Ages, itself rotten, and in a state of decadence bordering upon utter ruin, was scarcely able to ameliorate the condition of society, to inspire courage and comfort, to educate or admonish. Its rich establishments all over the country were sacked and roughly treated, often they were razed to the ground. Its fat livings and emoluments

shrank away to almost nothing. Impoverished ecclesiastics became desperate, and stuck at no course of action that would at all swell their revenues. The accumulation of benefices by a single individual was one resultant evil. The Cardinal d'Estoutville, for example, who lived in Italy, was at once Bishop of St. Jean de Maurienne, of Digne, of Béziers ; Archbishop of Rouen, Abbot of St. Ouen, of Rouen, of Jumièges, of Monteberg, and of Mont St. Michael. Monasteries and convents, left with no responsible heads, gave themselves over to every sort of intrigue and scandalous excess. High dignitaries of the Church were no whit better in their way of life, whilst the lay clergy became a byword for their disgraceful doings and abandoned dissipations. Many, deserting their wretched cures either voluntarily or of necessity, became common vagabonds, pedlars, strolling players, robbers, brigands, and assassins, and thus figure in the documents of the day.

The great corporate religious body losing its prestige, and practically, as a united corporate body, ceasing to exist, religion lost stability and sanity, and degenerated into hysterical panic, gloomy superstition, or a hideous defiance of God and man. Religious imagination ran riot ; it became obsessed by the idea of death in every form. It delighted to represent in painting, for public exhibition, *La Danse Macabre* or the *Dance of Death*, in which the grim, sneering skeleton figure appears over and over again, calling and beckoning, to a common doom, the Pope, the king, the lord, the peasant, the blooming girl, and the young child. In no age have men so surpassed themselves in the ridiculing of sacred things. Comic religious processions, burlesque ceremonials, parodies of sacred writings and of sacred symbols were common. Bacchanalian revels were countenanced and joined in by the clergy themselves, and carried to the very altar steps.

To make life and thought yet more hideous, the unholy

love for forbidden mysteries spread like a canker in the land. Healthy desire for knowledge and for experience became diseased and perverted, magic arts were hailed with a morbid and passionate avidity. Astrology and alchemy flourished as legitimate studies, whilst demonology, sorcery, and the invocation of evil spirits, and intercourse with the souls of the damned, were carried on secretly with fearful ardour; mystic circles were drawn, spells uttered, powders burnt, waxen images baptized, sacrifices offered both grotesque and horrible.

Frightened and scandalized authorities issued works for the warning and guidance of the innocent. In these days there was scattered over the country a whole literature of demonology, which obtained its facts ostensibly through the forced confessions of sorcerers, and laid down the law concerning demons and their habits in a dogmatic and grotesque manner. One of these manifestos is the *Malleus Maleficarum* of the German monk Sprenger. It is an absurd production—vain, ignorant, pretentious, teeming with inaccuracies and conceived in a spirit of fanatical bigotry; it remains a literary and historical curiosity.

As the evil grew more crying, public and ecclesiastical opinion lost all impartiality and balance. Suspected sorcerers, and amongst them many harmlessly weak-minded, eccentric, or entirely innocent persons, were haled to trial, torture, and a horrible death. Courts of inquiry were especially instituted in various parts of the country for dealing with such cases.

It is on record that the Vice-Inquisitor of St. Jorioz held inquiry upon the character of a woman, Antoinette, the wife of Jean Rose, who was accused as a sorceress, and arraigned before his tribunal. The woman was put to the question and would confess nothing. Suspended in mid-air by means of a rope passed under the arms, and a pulley, she still kept silence, and her questioners resorted to a more

complete torture. Three times she was raised into the air, and three times allowed to fall to the ground in a manner to crush and break her limbs. She did not speak. A night of agony with a prospect of more to come altered her mind, and in the morning she made the following extraordinary confession : She had had a connexion with the Evil One for a period of eleven years. At the beginning of that time she had been in terrible difficulty about a question of money. A man called Masset Garin had promised to help her, and had taken her to a witch's orgy. There had been present other persons of her neighbourhood, whom she named to the inquisitor. She entered into relations with a spirit called *Robinet*. Sometimes this spirit was like a dark man, but sometimes he was like a black dog. For his sake she denied God and trod the cross under foot. Then he made a mark on the little finger of her left hand, and this finger afterwards remained without power and as if dead. He gave her a broomstick, and upon this she rode, through the air, to witches' meetings and infernal gatherings. Here there was eaten the flesh of children dug up from their graves, powerful drugs were concocted to cure or to kill, and unspeakable orgies indulged in till the dawn.

This trial occurred in Savoy, in the year 1477. It is related with some detail, but it is precisely the same in character as the trials held in France in the reign of Charles VII.—as that, for instance, of Deniselle, an unfortunate "lady of pleasure" who was burnt for witchcraft at Arras.

The whole thing is a melancholy study in morbid psychology. Forced confessions extracted by torture, or the fear of torture, answers to questions unfairly put, and coloured by the imagination of judges, cannot be accepted as evidence. Upon the other hand, it would be idle to deny the existence of sorcery in the Middle Ages, as a condition of mind diseased and monstrous, as the terrified belief in its

power. Fostered by the mysterious force of suggestion, and the deplorable moral atmosphere of the times, this condition was not at all infrequent.

It is curiously significant and typical of the Middle Ages, that the selfsame elements of social crises that made possible the sublime character of Joan of Arc, should also produce a race of unfortunate beings, with minds a pitiable fabric of ignorance and hallucination, superstition, error, and madness.

It is noticeable that (as in all ages and countries) witches greatly predominated over wizards. The latter were perhaps characterized by slightly different qualities. Often they could plead no mental disease as an excuse, but practised sorcery to terrorize or deceive, or in their greedily passionate search for knowledge, power, riches, or pleasure.

The figure of the great baron, Gilles de Rais, who is still sometimes called the Blue-beard of Brittany, is in this connexion the most striking figure of the fifteenth, and probably of any other century.

The story of his life and actions is so filled with nightmare horror, the recorded details of his career are touched with so mad an exaggeration, his crimes display so extraordinary an invention, such a refinement of brutality, his trial is so sensational, the circumstances of his death so unexpected and so picturesque, that the assemblage of these things produces an effect of wild improbability, and strikes the imagination like an Eastern tale.

However, there is not much in history that is better attested than the doings of Gilles de Rais. There still exist numbers of his private accounts, of deeds relating to the alienation of his lands, letters-patent issued by Charles VII. touching the administration of his fortune, a memorial drawn up by his heirs describing his criminal extravagance, and above all, the authentic documents relating to his trial

and condemnation—one of the most curious collections of evidence ever compiled.

A study of the Baron de Rais' personality and career is thus rendered possible, and it is worth the making, not for the gratification of a morbid taste or the love of horrors, but for the better understanding of one aspect of the declining Middle Ages. The life of Gilles de Rais must be regarded as something not exceptional, but typical of this period, with its violent mysticism, its greedy taste for the supernatural, its refined artistic sense, its ambition, its lust for gold, for knowledge, and for pleasure, its carelessness of human life.

Gilles de Rais was born about the year 1404 at the castle of Machecoul in Brittany. He was the eldest son of Guy de Laval (who adopted the name and arms of Rais, for reasons connected with his inheritance) and of Marie de Craon, heiress of Machecoul. He counted among his ancestry representatives of the noblest families of western France—Rais, Montmorency, Laval, Machecoul, and Craon. He was the grandson of Brumor de Laval, a hero of chivalry, and great nephew of the noble and illustrious Du Guesclin, Constable of France. Peculiar family circumstances combined to make him the heir to enormous lands and riches; he was to become the chief of the barons of Brittany, with possessions extending between the Loire and the boundaries of Poitu. Of his childhood nothing is directly known; but judging from the tastes and accomplishments which, in after life, he very liberally displayed, his earliest education must have been a good deal in advance of his times, including not only instruction in the arts of war, and in the complex rules of the order of chivalry, but the study of Latin in some degree, and an introduction to the delights of poetry and the arts.

In 1425 or thereabouts Gilles de Rais, being in the first flower of youthful manhood, came with Count Arthur of

Richemont, to the Court of the Dauphin Charles. He was made welcome by the Dauphin, and the courtiers, who were endeavouring with some success to take the misfortunes of their country not too heavily, and in spite of danger, poverty, and threatened ruin, to go from day to day as merrily as might be, and to squeeze all the pleasure possible out of an uncertain life.

The easy, irresponsible manner of existence at Chinon and elsewhere, Gilles took to very kindly. He was noticed, petted, and sought after. His handsome face, his courage, his buoyant spirits, his many graces of character made him a general favourite. Besides, the Dauphin was poor, many of the courtiers were extremely poor, and the Baron de Rais was not only extraordinarily rich, but generous to the point of mad extravagance, therefore was he caressed by favourites and flattered to the top of his bent, his frivolous tastes were indulged, his pride and his ambition nourished, and his petulance condoned.

In the field he carried all before him, for he was ardent, and possessed a very remarkable personal bravery. And here again his fortune stood him in good stead, for he was able to provide weapons and provisions, and to maintain men and horses. He fought with the great captains, with La Hire, with Richemont, and with Ambroise de Loré. Above all, with the gallant Beaumanoir it seems that he entered into a Brotherhood of Arms; for they were continually together at skirmish, ambuscade, and siege, brightening by their deeds of valour, and their warlike exploits, some of the most disastrous years that France has ever seen.

When the Maid came from the quiet fields of Domrémy to save the country, Gilles de Rais was at Chinon. He became her most devoted follower, being especially deputed to ride and to fight at her side. He was with her continually during the first part of her public career. He was

with her at Chinon, Poitiers, Blois, Orleans, and during her campaign in the basin of the Loire ; at Jargeau, Meung, Beaugency, and Patay. He was with her at Rheims when she brought the Dauphin thither to be crowned, with her before the walls of Paris, and it is even claimed that he was near her during her captivity at Rouen, endeavouring to carry out her rescue. At Rheims, Gilles was very highly honoured—he was made a Marshal of France. Together with Jean d'Alençon ; Charles, Duke of Bourbon ; Louis of Bourbon, Count of Vendôme ; George de la Tremouille, and André de Laval, he represented the six lay peers of the realm. According to the chronicler Jean Chartier, and the famous letter written by three Angevin gentlemen to Yolande of Aragon, the King's mother-in-law, Charles VII. commissioned the Baron de Rais to ride with four other knights to the Abbey of St. Remy, there to receive the *Sainte Ampoule* from the hands of the Abbot.

At this time he was twenty-five years of age.

The Marshal de Rais fought with the Maid under the walls of Paris, but after that ill-starred expedition, and the retreat which followed it, in both of which the marks of treachery and of interest are but too visible, it is impossible to discover exactly what became of him. He may have remained at the Court of Charles VII. or with the army itself, carrying out the duties of his high position. He may have been installed as governor of some fortified place, as was the lot of many a warlike captain at this time ; or disgusted at the newly signed and scarcely honourable truce he may, like the Duke of Alençon, have retired to his own lands, ill content, to rest and to brood over his scars. Certain it is that during the time which passed between the retreat from Paris and the death of Joan of Arc, his appearance upon the theatre of action is only once recorded, and then he was near Rouen, where the Maid was held in durance. The Constable Arthur of Richemont and

La Hire fought all the winter of 1430 upon the Norman frontiers. . A veritable army had its headquarters at Louviers, of which one division was equipped and kept up at the expense of the Marshal de Rais. There exists a document signed by his hand, acknowledging his debt to Roland Mauvoisin, his squire, the Captain of Prinçay, for the sum of eight score golden crowns, spent in the purchase of a horse, with saddle and bridle, which he (Gilles) had promised to his very dear and well-beloved Squire Michel Machefey, captain of men-at-arms in his company, to be given to him upon their arrival in Louviers, because he had come upon this enterprise. This document dates from the 26 December 1431, and is signed "Gilles."

It has been suggested that the Marshal concentrated forces at Louviers in order to attempt the rescue of the Maid from her prison. This is always possible, and some weight is given to the idea by the fact that there was a party in Rouen who feared so much some action of the kind, that they urged the drowning of the Maid in the Seine, without further waiting or ceremony. Be this as it may, it is well known there was no rescue, and Joan of Arc committed her virgin body to the fire, and her innocent soul to God, upon the 30th of May, in the year of grace 1431.

Upon this day Gilles de Rais was bereft of an influence of a wholesome and restraining character, and his chronicler must perforce take up the tale in a lower and a minor key, first pausing, however, to relate something of the personality and manner of life of this melancholy hero, while as yet his glory had not entirely departed from him; to show something of his power of attraction before he turned it to the morbid attraction of horror, something of his beauty before he caused it to be irreparably marred.

The keynote of this man's character was his taste for

the mysterious, his overmastering bent for the supernatural. There are persons whose stumbling-block is an inability to believe, who are sceptical and so despairing, and so defiant. Gilles de Rais was not of this stamp—above all things, he possessed *faith*, indomitable and unbounded. He was of the stuff whereof genius is made, built on a grand scale, imaginative, heroic, a poet and an artist in evil, a saint and a martyr spoilt.

His dominating quality was first developed by his relations with the Maid. Her personality appealed exactly to his peculiar type of imagination. He was conquered by her mystery, her purity, her beauty, and her power. She gained an ascendancy over his spirit. When she went from him, he was at a loss, burning with vast desires unsatisfied and uncontrolled, tortured with mysteries half revealed, chafing under the limitations of the flesh, and baffled by the inexplicable.

For his times he was a learned and extremely accomplished man. He is described by contemporaries as a lord of excellent understanding, fine person, and splendid manners, with a great respect for those who were able to express themselves in elegant Latin. Of this language he himself had considerable knowledge. He was a generous and enlightened patron of literature, drama, and the arts, and delighted to surround himself with men skilled in these things, as well as with the evidences of their labour. He collected paintings and precious manuscripts, illuminated writings, embroideries, and wonders of needlework in silk and cloth of gold, musical instruments, and precious vessels encrusted with jewels.

He maintained enormous households at his many castles—Tiffauges, Machecoul, Champtocé, and La Suze—a legion of servants, retainers, and favourites and their servants, scholars and pages and hangers-on without number. In his taste for the theatre he rivalled René d'Anjou, the

King of Sicily. He kept a private troupe of actors, at enormous expense, for the casts not infrequently included *hundreds* of performers. He caused pageants and processions, mysteries and miracles, to be composed and produced. He provided the stage, the costly properties, and the actors' very elaborate costumes, which he insisted upon renewing for every new play. That there might be as brave a show as possible, he required that the humbler characters should be as finely dressed as the mimic kings and princes. With a barbaric disregard for the fitness of things, and a mania for lavish display, all alike appeared in cloth of gold, or cloth of silver, crimson satin, brocades, jewelled velvet, silks, and embroideries or inlaid armour :—

“ Cent joueurs habillés de soie
Et de velours à pleine voix.”

The Marshal de Rais had a fine library, in which he took great delight and pride, and which, needless to say, was a source of enormous expense. He employed bookbinders, who exercised their delicate art, not only upon rare leathers, but upon precious metals and stones as well. He had in his permanent service an illuminator, who made him decorations of fanciful style and brilliant colour. He collected psalters and Books of Hours, and such Latin works as were known and appreciated in his day. It is said that he read Suetonius; he possessed Ovid's “Metamorphoses,” and St. Augustine's “City of God,” both in Latin and in French. One of these volumes is described in a receipt for the wiping out of a debt, which it appears the Marshal paid in kind—“Ung livre en parchemin nommè *Ovide Metamorphoses* couvert d'un cuir vermeil, armé à cloz de cuivre et à fermoirs d'argent doré.”

Further to gratify his sense of power, his love of display, and in particular his military tastes, Gilles de Rais created for himself a private military establishment, with every

proper circumstance and adjunct appertaining thereunto. He kept a body of more than two hundred men, all mounted, knights, squires, and pages magnificently equipped and attired, the whole forming a brilliant court which a prince might well have envied. All these individuals had their titles and appointed officers. There was a herald amongst them called *Rais-le-héraut*. They were liberally paid, had their own servants to wait upon them, fed at the Marshal's table, which he kept open to all comers, and were clothed at his expense. Two or three times in the year, all their gorgeous and extremely costly array was renewed. Their weapons and accoutrements were kept in order for them, their horses stabled, fed, and groomed.

Still more curious and interesting is Gilles de Rais' fancy for the foundation of a religious order.

In March of the year 1435 he was in the town of Orleans. Being, it would appear, somewhat troubled in his mind (and not without reason), he issued a very strange document. It confirmed a foundation he had lately made in memory of the *Holy Innocents*. It will presently be understood that this was perhaps the most astonishing of all his actions.

Thus Gilles de Rais created himself an ecclesiastical household. At Machecoul and at Tiffauges there were established the clergy of a cathedral. There was a *doyen*, la Ferrière, an archdeacon, Jourdain, a treasurer, a master of the school, canons and chaplains and clerks, as well as choristers grown, and a number of children. These, with their attendants, formed a group of more than fifty persons, who carried on their avocations in beautiful and richly furnished chapels—dressed in “surplices of the finest tissue”—their mantles turned back with miniver, their vestments made of cloth of gold and the richest stuffs that could be procured, and wrought with gems. The vessels and ornaments, chalices, vases, and candlesticks were of the

most magnificent sort, and were the work of a master goldsmith, especially maintained. The Baron de Rais loaded his clergy with gifts of lands and money, accounting no expenditure too great when it was a question of securing the services of a new clerk, or of a sweet-voiced child. One day he heard a boy sing in the church of St. Hilary, at Poitiers. The boy was called Rossignol, and came from La Rochelle. Gilles de Rais presented him with an estate near Machecoul, and gave three hundred crowns to his parents. He then sent to fetch the child with a great train of people, "as if he had been the illustrious son of a great house," write the Baron's disgusted heirs in their memorial.

The same disappointed personages bear testimony relating to daily life in the Baron's castles, which it appears were kept continually open to all comers, the tables were always spread, and there was an inexhaustible flow of wine and hypocras. From time to time presents were distributed, suits of clothes by the score, to casual persons whom Gilles de Rais had never even seen, simply that his name and his generosity might be bruited abroad. As for the host of parasites that caressed and flattered him and sucked his blood, the number of them is not to be reckoned, and their profits are incalculable.

In the matter of personal luxury, the Hôtel de la Suze at Nantes far surpassed in comfort and in richness the Duke of Brittany's palace. Gilles de Rais' oratory had pictures painted upon its beams ; its windows were stained glass of the purest and brightest colours ; its walls were hung with cloth of gold, which, it is declared, was purchased at a cost of six hundred pounds of our present money the ell. Machecoul and Champtocé were scarcely less splendid, whilst Tiffauges, which Gilles especially favoured as a residence, was the most magnificently maintained of all.

It will be understood how ruinously extravagant was the Baron's mode of life, even when it suited him to take up a

fixed abode for a reasonable length of time. This, however, was comparatively seldom. More often his restless spirit demanded constant change, and he spent his days travelling from castle to castle, or from town to town. The mere fact of journeying was dangerous, difficult, and expensive enough in his time, but of such things the Baron de Rais recked nothing. His travelling was accomplished after the fashion of a royal progress. There went with him, in the first place, his personal following of attendants and favourites, all mounted and equipped at his expense. After them, his military establishment fitly accoutred; then besides, his ecclesiastical establishment, whose members were provided with the most expensive hackneys for the road. They took with them great heavy chests and packages, with changes of raiment—for it is recorded that they wore short garments of fine cloth to ride the more comfortably; but within doors, or in the towns, their long robes trailed upon the ground and were made of scarlet and other cloth, furred with marten and miniver. They were probably encumbered with various articles of church furniture and ornament; it is known that they had portable organs. Travelling in great state they made their way through Brittany, Poitou, and Anjou, they visited Nantes, Angers, Bourges, and Montluçon; Orleans was perhaps the Baron's town of predilection. Once he spent there many months together (1434-35). His younger brother, René de la Suze, was with him. Upon that occasion his name was in every one's mouth, and his money flowed from him like water. His retainers were distributed through every inn in the town. He himself lodged at the *Golden Cross*; his clergy were at the *Crown of St. George* and at the *Sign of the Sword*. His men-at-arms were quartered with Mistress Agnes Grosvillain at the *Black Head*. Loys, the Angevin, Captain of the Guard, was at the *Great Salmon*; Denis, the armourer, at the *Sign of the Cup*. Lord René

de la Suze was at the *Little Salmon*; whilst divers others of the Marshal's company were at the *White Horse*, the *Wild Man*, the *Crown of Orleans*, and the *God of Love*.

From the beginning, it was certain that Gilles de Rais' manner of living could not last. His mad generosity, his way of gratifying every expensive taste, of obtaining every expensive pleasure, of acquiring fame by mere force of spending money, his scorn of the most ordinary prudence—these things at last began to tell even upon his unusually great fortune, and to tell pretty heavily too. He became pressed for ready-money, and perpetually sought to obtain it by all the rash and ruinous means in his power. Everywhere he strained his credit to the last degree, and then had recourse to borrowing from the first-comer. Money-lender, tradesman, or one of his own servants, it was the same to him, and the conditions of the loan were always marked by the same astonishing ignorance or carelessness.

He left in bond, or sold outright and for half their value, many of his rare and beautiful possessions. Rings and jewels and precious books, chariots and suits of armour, all went the same way, as well as the decorative objects that he had collected to adorn his religious ceremonies, golden candlesticks, a green cope (in cloth of damask) with a silver collar, an altar-cloth of damask, vermillion-coloured, four curtains of green silk, a piece of cloth of gold, a black satin chasuble, a rose-coloured baldequin figured in green, a cope of violet velvet, hangings and embroidery.

He parted with his horse *Cassenoix*, of whom it is said he was very fond.

All this was not enough, or nearly enough, and Gilles de Rais was constrained to barter away his lands. This he did, to such purpose that his relations, and his heirs above all, took fright, and in their panic appealed to the King, demanding his intervention in the matter.

In the year 1435-36 Charles VII. accordingly issued

letters-patent, expressly forbidding, upon the one hand, the Marshal de Rais to sell his lands, and forbidding, upon the other, the purchase of the said lands by any persons soever, upon pain of grave punishment.

The order was proclaimed in Orleans, Tours, Angers, Champtocé, Pouzange, Tiffauges, and other places, but was robbed of almost all power for good on account of the attitude of the Duke of Brittany, who never acceded to its terms, but continued to treat, both in his own person and through various agents, with the interdicted Baron de Rais. The latter proceeded upon the course he had chosen for himself, without economy or retrenchment of any sort, except that in the end of 1435 he abandoned Court and town life, more or less, and shut himself up for longer periods in one or other of his fortified castles, where he led a mysterious existence, and had a continuous but secret occupation. His revenues continued to dwindle rapidly, but he let them go, being nourished by a very curious expectation. In this expectation he persevered with the force of his ardent and complex nature, though his heart sickened with hope long deferred, and his whole being was ravaged by burning desire unsatisfied.

Gilles de Rais, demanding knowledge, riches, and power unlimited, devoted himself to the study of alchemy, and the search for the Philosopher's Stone.

The science of the later Middle Ages was characterized by two principal qualities—its ignorance and its curiosity. In a time made dreadful by wars and rumours of wars, in a country where sentiments of national unity can scarcely be said to have existed, the spirit of true learning could live no more than the spirit of true religion. The early Middle Ages were great in lively faith and in profitable study, but if such names as those of Gerson and Pierre d'Ailly are excepted, the traditions of the great doctors seem to have faded quite away. The acquisition of knowledge appeared

to be at a standstill. Then a wild fever of impatience shook the intellect of the age. Irritated by their own impotence and ignorance, and stimulated by a curiosity in proportion to that ignorance, men came to declare that the path of science was relentlessly barred, except to those possessed of supernatural powers. Hence occult studies, black magic, alchemy, and the development of the Faust character. The mind having once fairly contemplated the forbidden realm, it became hardly possible for it to revert to legitimate channels of thought. The student of necromancy and magic burnt his boats, took enormous risks, and with half despairing intensity staked his all upon a forlorn hope. He lived his life out in secrecy and danger, poring over volumes of incantations, or mixing enchanted philtres in a retort. Alchemy was the pursuit *par excellence* in this sort.

The object of alchemy, as all the world knows, was the transmutation of metals, the production of gold and silver by artificial means. Alchemists believed that they could bring about their end with the help of the Philosopher's Stone. This was a mysterious talisman, with no fixed name, but variously described as the Philosopher's Stone or Powder, the Grand Magister, the Elixir of Life, and the Quintessence. Its qualities were strange and desirable, for it could turn vile metals to gold, cure every disease, restore vanished youth, and indefinitely prolong human life. The learned differed as to the appearance of the treasure : it was yellow, some said—as yellow as saffron ; others declared it to be red as a poppy—one compared it to sulphur, and another to a carbuncle. “This stone combines all hues,” writes an ancient author ; “it is white, red, yellow, sky-blue, and green.”

To him perhaps must be accorded the honour of having delivered the last word.

Gilles de Rais abandoned himself to the study of occultism with a completeness worthy of his age, his singular char-

acter, and the enormous value of his stakes ; for he cast fortune, honour, and life into the hazard. The whole fabric of his being was burnt and shattered by the intensity of his passionate desire to obtain more from life than life had to give. He was possessed by a monstrous ambition ; he was in love with the impossible, coveting a degree of knowledge, riches, and power unattainable, and perhaps non-existent. Lured by a golden promise, he entered upon a course which was harmless enough in its outset, to all except himself, which brought him to a pass of unparalleled horror, and led him to commit deeds without a name.

Now there was a certain soldier who was detained as a prisoner in the castle of Angers for a crime of heresy, and there existed relations between him and the Baron de Rais, although the time and the circumstances of their arising is unknown. The Baron visited the soldier secretly in his prison more than once, and had of him a book which treated of alchemy, and of the Invocation of Demons. When he left Angers, Gilles returned the book to the soldier, in bidding him farewell, and the two in all probability saw each other no more. The Baron's interest, however, had been aroused, and from that time he revolved an idea continually in his mind. Confused rumours reached him from all parts of his own land, as well as from foreign countries, and to these he lent an attentive ear. He sent emissaries to Germany and to the Low Countries, to England, and above all, to Italy. These messengers collected information, and sought out adepts in alchemy, to induce them to come to the Baron de Rais, in order that he might profit by their curious learning ; great prizes and rewards were offered, and many magicians were attracted to the dark walls of Mache-coul or Tiffauges, and held conference with their grim lord.

Gilles de Rais made his selection of companions, and presently the group of alchemists got to work in earnest. By the evidence at the Baron's trial, they were chiefly

Italians, amongst them Antony of Palermo, Francis Lombard, and Francisco Prelati; there was also Jean Petit, a goldsmith of Paris. Operations were carried on at the castle of Tiffauges, furnaces were secretly constructed, and a mysterious apparatus procured at infinite expense, and duly installed. Quantities of gold and precious metals were used in the course of experiments. Mercury, the great hope of alchemists, ran freely from vessel to vessel. Day after day the Baron and his familiars toiled patiently, bending over their compounds until twilight overtook them at their labours. For a time they seemed to prosper, and the heart of Gilles throbbed with passionate expectation. Straining his ardent eyes he could almost behold the yellow glitter in the bottom of the retort, the dim outline of the Philosopher's Stone, or detect the presence of the still more mysterious *Egg of Life*.

Once, so it seemed to him, success was absolutely within his grasp, the secret was all but his own; but as he nerved himself for the final effort, as he stretched his trembling fingers, before clasping them about his prize, there was heard the watchman's warning note, followed by a mighty knocking at the castle gate. Tiffauges opened unwillingly to receive a most unwelcome guest, and Louis the Dauphin of France rode into the courtyard with his following. At this time the severe laws of Charles V. against alchemy still obtained, and the Baron was fairly caught. Beside himself with disappointment and rage, wild agony in his eye and burning fury in his heart, he was obliged to go forth and greet his guest with soft words and courtesies, whilst his accomplices destroyed the traces of forbidden labours in the mysterious chamber which he had quitted. Thus the toil of months became of no avail.

Gathering his energies after this rebuff, Gilles de Rais flung himself into the pursuit of his prize with greater ardour than before, but in a darker mood, for disappointment had

embittered him, and the iron had entered into his soul. Bringing into play his powers of concentration and perseverance, he lived for one object alone. As proved by the event, he could not work securely in his own fortified castle ; he therefore sought elsewhere the necessary safety, silence, and mystery.

Not far from the church of St. Nicolas at Tiffauges there dwelt Perrota, an ancient hag of evil repute. Her house was lonely, and in other respects convenient, therefore the Baron chose it as the scene of his labours. Sometimes the old group was gathered together here ; but more often Prelati the Italian worked alone, having gained the complete confidence of his patron, who came continually, sometimes at nightfall, sometimes at dawn, or at the first cock-crow, to watch him or to press for tidings. Thus passed the year 1439, from the time of the Ascension till All Saints' Day. And the Baron never found the Philosopher's Stone.

Now alchemy and black magic went ever hand in hand, and it cannot be said at what point precisely Gilles de Rais, sick with failure, where the former art was concerned, called in the latter to his aid. It is probable that during his vigils with Prelati the Baron was introduced to circles and spells and cabalistic signs, infernal invocations, and the whole magic paraphernalia ; that he stood barefoot, a golden sword-blade upon his forehead, and by the light of two wax candles performed a secret ceremonial, before a secret altar. They lighted fires, burning incense and aloes, and prostrated themselves before an unseen presence. They stood with torches in their hands and called for aid, and were overheard. Prelati spoke softly—"Satan, Satan, come and help us!" Gilles found that alchemy was for him no royal way to fortune, but rather a new and broad road to ruin ; knowledge, power, and wealth were further from him than ever. Far otherwise was the consummation he had pictured to himself. But for all this he would not turn back, or stay at all in the

course that he had chosen, but of his own will plunged forward, and down into the bottomless pit that was to engulf him.

Gilles de Rais, losing confidence in himself and in his friends, called the powers of darkness to his aid. No responsibility can be taken for the truth of the very strange stories that are about to follow. They are gleaned from the confession of Gilles de Rais at his trial, and from the confessions of his various accomplices ; and, as it will appear later, there is strong reason for belief in the good faith of these persons, for at the time in question they had nothing whatever to gain by their assertions. It is almost certain that they said what they believed to be the truth. What actually did occur is a very different consideration, and regarding the case from a modern point of view, it perhaps becomes the pre-eminently important question ; but it must be remembered that to the mind of the fifteenth century such an aspect hardly presented itself—it was rank heresy.

It will be best to set down the facts as related without further comment.

There was a great wood outside the town and castle of Tiffauges. It was a wild and lonely place, and there was no habitation near it. Gilles de Rais came there in the dead of night with certain of his companions—Henriet, Poitu, Blanchet, and Jean de la Rivière, who was learned in necromancy. They halted in the black darkness and silence upon the outskirts of the forest. After a whispered word the magician, wearing a cuirass and a helmet, and with a sword in his hand, advanced alone, and was lost to the straining sight of those who waited in the crowding thickness of the trees. The moments passed ; they saw nothing, heard nothing, and stood their ground. Suddenly a great noise of combat burst from the wood, the clash of steel, the rustling and crashing of boughs, and the hoarse cries of a mortal fight. At length the Master appeared staggering, covered

with blood and sweat, and told the others of an encounter with the Evil One, in the form of a leopard, which had finally disappeared, without giving utterance to a single word. After this the night adventurers returned to the castle of Tiffauges, where they could not go to rest, but sat together drinking until the dawn.

The next recorded attempt took place also at Tiffauges, this time in a room of the castle. There were present an Invoquer of Demons, whose name is not mentioned, the Baron de Rais and Gilles de Sillé, one of his boon companions. The magician drew a magic circle upon the floor, and ordered the other two to stand with him within its limits. The Baron obeyed at once, but Gilles de Sillé, suddenly losing his nerve, could not bring himself to do so, and crouched in a corner of the room shaking from head to foot with a mysterious and uncontrollable horror, clutching to his bosom the while a picture or image of the Virgin. The Baron and the magician waited within the circle. Suddenly a shudder passed through Gilles de Rais, and his teeth chattered in spite of himself; he grew sick with fright. He longed to make the sign of the cross, but the magician had expressly forbidden it, on pain of utter ruin, and he dared not. In his panic a prayer to the Virgin burst from his lips, the *Alma Redemptoris*. "Leap from the circle," cried the magician in a terrible voice. "Fly!" Fly they did—the Baron by the door, which he pushed to behind him, and Gilles de Sillé by the open window. The magician was left alone to encounter the fury of the evil spirit, and the two outside felt their blood freeze at the sounds of a hideous *mélée*.

After a long time the uproar subsided, and was followed by an ominous silence. Then Gilles de Rais, summoning up his courage, entered his castle and pushed open the door of the mysterious chamber. Close to the threshold lay the Invoquer of Demons, crushed, bleeding, and almost dead.

The Baron took him up in his arms and carried him to his own bed, where every care was lavished upon him. Gilles was afraid that he would die unshaven, and to provide against this contingency very characteristically had him confessed. But the magician gradually recovered, to the Baron's intense joy and relief.

All this time Gilles got never a sight of the devil. He had felt vague and mysterious presences, and even believed he had heard something, he scarcely knew what, but this was not enough. In vain he traced circles, burnt powders, made promises and sacrifices. The spirit of evil would not materialize before him. He wrote a schedule, or a compact with blood drawn from his little finger, and signed it thus with his name, "Gilles." Later he wrote a second, signed, in the same manner, with blood. He demanded knowledge, wealth, and power, and promised the devil in return anything and everything that he had to give, except his body and except his soul ; these he invariably kept back.

Upon All Saints' Day Gilles prepared a great ceremonial, and caused a Mass to be chanted in honour of the Prince of Darkness, and for the souls of the damned ; but for this conception of his monstrous imagination he obtained no reward from the quarter to which he continually appealed. The Evil One would not hear him. Gilles de Rais was in despair.

At this point the Italian Prelati gained his entire confidence, and the smouldering embers of hope flamed up once more in the Baron's heart. Summoning his courage for a last effort, he gave his hand to his guide with a trust which was nothing less than pathetic, and faced his problems yet again with a dogged perseverance, which, whatever its object, was in itself nothing less than admirable. Prelati discovered a new doctor of magic, with a fresh treatise in his possession. This work Prelati borrowed. It was a book written with black ink, partly upon papyrus, and

partly upon parchment, and ornamented with rubrics. It was extremely mysterious and valuable. Prelati decided to undertake a new series of experiments according to its directions, and once more the Baron held out his hand for his prize.

Upon a summer night of the year 1439 a great attempt was made at the castle of Tiffauges ; Blanchet, Poitu, Henriet, Prelati, and Gilles de Rais sat at table together, and prolonged their feasting into the night. At length they gathered in a great room of the castle, whose four windows were opened wide to the green valley and its streams, and to the bright stars above. They brought there three braziers of charcoal and burning fuel, with incense, torches, and candles of white wax.

Having prepared all these things, Gilles and Prelati traced a great circle with the point of a sword upon the ground. Within the circle they drew crosses in four different places, and other mysterious signs. In the centre the fire flickered with a pale and uncertain flame. Prelati threw powder upon it, with incense, myrrh, and aloes, when a thick cloud of scented vapour arose and filled the room. Gilles de Rais then bid Blanchet, Henriet, and Poitu to depart to his bedroom, there to watch and await his coming. Once there, he forbade them absolutely to stir, or ever after to breathe a word upon what they might chance to see or hear. The three obeyed, and Poitu presently dropped asleep, but Henriet and Eustache Blanchet waited and listened.

Below, in the great silent room, Gilles de Rais and Prelati entered the mystic circle. Prelati with the Book of Black Magic in his hand, Gilles holding a pact with the Evil One, written by himself and signed with his blood. They prayed and promised and sacrificed. Standing and kneeling they read together in the book, they invoked, they commanded, and they entreated.

"I adjure you, Baron, Satan, Belial, Beelzebub, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary, and of all the saints, that you come here in person both to speak with us and to do our will."

Thus cried Prelati, and Gilles de Rais echoed from the very depths of his proud heart :

"Come, ministers of power, you who know all hidden things, knowledge and the science of life—come, for I call you—come, for I promise you all, all but my life and my soul, if you will give me what I desire, gold and knowledge and power."

They called and waited. But they had no answer, only the river ran on in the valley, and night insects cried.

Blanchet and Henriet watched in the Marshal's bed-chamber, in the deep blackness of the night. They gasped and clung together for fear ; for they heard a sound upon the roof, like the footfall of a great four-footed beast, and the noise passing over their heads grew loud and terrible, and then died away in the direction of a certain postern of the castle, which was near the place where Gilles de Rais was. But of this they said not a word to their master, but kept it locked in their hearts. In the small hours Prelati and the Baron joined their friends. Gilles, weary to death, and in a dark, despairing mood, declared aloud that he had been deceived, and that nobody in the world had the power to evoke demons.

Nevertheless he would not, or could not desist from his course. There remains the record of an invocation that he made in the month of July 1440, during the last weeks of his liberty, but upon the whole his hopes of a personal interview with the Evil One decreased steadily, and his attempts were carried on through Francisco Prelati. They were extremely frequent, and, as the Italian declared, fairly successful. There was the midnight invocation at the lonely inn of *Esperance*, when Poitu stood within the

circle holding Gilles de Rais' pact between his fingers. In the pact were these words : “*Veni ad voluntatem meam et faciam tibi quidquid volveris, excepta anima meam et diminutione vite meæ.*”

There was the affair of the golden ingots, and the Great Green Serpent, and that of the magic powder, and Prelati's dangerous encounter with the fiend, in which he all but met his death. Finally, there were the several occasions upon which *Baron*, an evil spirit, appeared to Prelati in the form of a beautiful young man, or otherwise, and through him delivered his orders to Gilles de Rais. These orders were capricious. One day it was an act of truly Christian charity to be performed, whilst on the next was demanded a sacrilegious deed, and Gilles obeyed them all.

There was one of the fiend's behests which calls for particular notice, for it turns the attention to a portion of the Baron de Rais' secret life which has not yet been referred to, but which must now be described, to complete, as far as may be, the picture of a singular and fearful personality.

It is said that the devil required of Gilles de Rais the sacrifice of human life—the hand, the heart, and the blood of a young child.

Once Henriet and Poitu saw the Baron kill a child before their very eyes. He gathered together the hand, the heart, the eyes, and the blood, and placed them in a vessel in his own chamber, and locked the door. In the evening, about dusk, Gilles took the vessel, and hiding it in his sleeve, went forth to seek Prelati at his lodging.

Exactly what occurred there is not known, but at the end of some time Gilles reappeared, sullen and displeased, whilst Prelati set off with a burden in his arms, which he carried to a small and lonely chapel, dedicated to St. Vincent. What he had brought he buried near to this place, and departed hurriedly, but as one who has relieved his mind.

Afterwards, at the trial, Prelati confessed that he had heard it said that the Baron de Rais had killed little children—“*Ut offeret illorum sanguinem et membra demonibus faciendo predictam invocacionam de ipsis demonibus.*” There were also extraordinary rumours as to a book that the Baron was said to be writing. Gilles de Rais invited Blanchet into his library to show him the cover of this book, which was of his own design and execution, a very beautiful piece of work. Blanchet examined and admired it, and at the same time his glance fell upon five or six sheets lying loosely upon the desk. With the exception of a wide margin, they were closely covered on both sides with red writing, in the Baron’s own hand. The writing was interspersed with crosses and other signs, also red. Blanchet decided that he had seen the Marshal’s terrible work written in children’s blood. It was alluded to with infinite horror, but with no doubt, all over the country-side. He slew children, says Monstrelet :—

“ From which children or other creatures, after he had caused them to die a violent death, was taken some of their blood, with which books were written, in which were diabolical conjurations and other things contrary to the Catholic Faith.”

Alain Bonchard, the great chronicler of Brittany, records how it was told of the Baron de Rais that he makes use of “ the art and science of necromancy, and that he caused to be murdered and slain a great number of children, so as to have their blood, with which to write all the characters necessary for the invoking of infernal spirits, trusting to obtain, by these means, great riches and treasure.”

Thus far he is a fearful example of the lengths that may be gone in the following of an impure and corrupt cult. He was no dark exception ; his acts, as they have been described, and his way of life was common in some degree to many magicians and sorcerers of the fifteenth

century. In common with others not a few, he merely pursued the lines prescribed by the masters of demonology and their hideous books. He typifies a certain aspect of his age.

But the matter certainly did not stop here. Gilles de Rais was an extraordinary personality. There can be no doubt that he was a genius, and thus he transcends his type. His temperament was exceedingly sensitive, and extremely passionate, imaginative, and enthusiastic. He was made of rarely fine material, plastic but strong. And the singular fact is this, that all through his outrageous career until the moment of his shameful death, the greatness of his character (for it had greatness) remained unimpaired. He committed deeds of revolting and inhuman cruelty—he did this continually; and neither in the motives of his actions nor in the mode of carrying them out can there be discovered a single redeeming feature. Nevertheless his figure is dignified, marked with distinction; he remains a melancholy hero. Who can be untouched by such a presentiment of beauty marred, a love of lovely things perverted, of great gifts misused, of the god in a man turned to devil?

Horror brooded over all the lands of Rais, and hung like a black cloud upon their confines, for their lord, with more success than he knew, had invoked the genius of evil. It was up and doing, not in palpable form, not as a graceful youth, Baron, or another, but within himself. Now reigned the dreadful and impious spirit of destruction, that flings insult and defiance at the Great Creator, daring to annul His fixed decree, and to deface and destroy His Living Image. Gilles de Rais, who murdered at first to serve his Master, at length tortured and massacred to gratify his own terrible lusts. In his crime he was a giant, and the like of him has not been seen in the world. For a while he dominated the country-side like a Lucifer incar-

nate, and the people were paralysed with fear. The Power of the Dog was let loose, and crouched by Tiffauges and by Machecoul.

As early as in the year 1437 certain of the relations and the heirs of Gilles de Rais became utterly disgusted at his insane extravagance, and at his disregard of the letters-patent issued by King Charles VII. touching the disposal of his property.

They—amongst them notably René de la Suze, Gilles' brother, and the Admiral de Lohéac, his cousin—took the law into their own hands, and possessed themselves of the fortresses of Champtocé and of Machecoul.

The action disturbed the Marshal greatly, and he set out to regain his castles, without lack of time. There were two very particular reasons why he wished to have them in his undisputed possession. In the first place, he was in need of money, and intended to hand over Champtocé to the Duke of Brittany for a consideration; and secondly, these fortresses held each its own secret, which it was the Baron's most ardent desire should be kept inviolate. Gilles de Rais therefore raised an army, and took Machecoul after very slight resistance; then Champtocé, which, with small negotiation, he sold to his overlord. He stayed there but a single night to perform a certain piece of work that was incumbent upon him. He first called to him, in his own bedchamber in the castle, various persons in whom he could trust, amongst them Henriet, Poitu, Roger de Bricqueville, and Gilles de Sillé. Here he explained to them the nature of what he was to do, for it might not be accomplished without their help. Having sealed their mouths by a terrible oath of silence, he revealed to them matters touching the most hidden and awful part of his life.

He led them to a tower in an unfrequented portion of the castle, in the base of which were piled up the mutilated and unburied corpses of a number of children. He said

that it was dangerous that the bodies should thus remain ; they must be disposed of, and at once. Poitu, together with one Robin Romulart, was let down with a long rope into the charnel-house. The lantern held from above cast a fitful light, touching the moisture upon the dark walls. The air was heavy, fetid, and damp. The two men turned sick with the horror of the place, for they found themselves by a heap of human remains—the bodies of children that had been murdered three months before, at the least. These they got, as best they could, into a great sack that they had brought down with them for the purpose, and were, with it, drawn up, pale and gasping. The sack was borne to the Marshal's chamber, where its contents were displayed as he stood impassively by. Outside Gilles de Sillé waited, to give the alarm upon the slightest noise, for they worked in horror of discovery. At length three heavy corded chests were carried in the darkness of the night down to the river, where a hidden barge lay awaiting them. Thus they were brought close to Machecoul, where a cart drew them from the bank to the castle, and they were taken immediately to the Baron's bed-chamber. A fire had been kindled in the open grate, and little by little all incriminating evidence was burnt, Gilles de Rais looking on. Then by his orders, the very ashes were gathered up and scattered to the four winds of heaven.

At Machecoul itself there had been played out a similar drama. There had been brought from the depths of a dark tower and burnt the remains of about eighty unfortunate little children. Gilles de Sillé and Robin Romulart did the work, and in doing it ran a great danger ; for Roger de Bricqueville introduced two ladies to the castle, and allowed them to see what was going on in the Baron's chamber of horrors by a narrow crack in the door. Why he did this remains a mystery, though Gilles de Sillé had his opinion upon the matter.

"Was not Messire Roger de Bricqueville a traitor," he said to Poitou, "who allowed the ladies of Tarville and Thomin d'Araguin to have sight of us when we did our work with the bones ? "

The ladies of Tarville and Thomin d'Araguin ! What a sight was there for gentle eyes !

From the year 1432 and onwards an extraordinary misfortune fell upon the people of the west of France in those districts which lie round about Angers, Rennes, Vannes, and La Rochelle. They went about softly, with furtive looks, low spoken, for ever suspicious and upon their guard—like folk who suffer from an enormous hidden ill. And all this not without a cause ; for every father and mother in that country lived in fear of losing what was to them most precious. A curse lay upon youth and grace and beauty. Boys, young girls, and little children were wont to vanish, as if by magic, from the fields where they herded the cattle, or the meadows where they played, from the bustle of the busy streets, or from the high road. They vanished, and nothing was ever heard of them again. Mothers waited and longed in vain, and the wise people shook their heads dolefully and talked about enchantments, and the well-known power of wicked fairies and dwarfs. But strong fathers bereaved, and mothers left desolate, were not long content with such an explanation. The evil was crying, and it augmented every day ; hardly a family of the countryside but mourned its youngest and its fairest ; not a mother but passed her days in continual dread. Bad news came from Machecoul to Tiffauges, from thence to Chamtocé. The horror was at Nantes or at Vannes, at Pornic or at Josselin. Nothing else was talked of. The traveller, terrified with grisly stories, hurried through the country with the best speed he might ; and the wife and daughter of Gilles de Rais, sitting at his fireside, shuddered and joined in the general woe.

The poor are ever patient, and now dire misery sharpened their faculties. The theory of supernatural disappearance was gradually abandoned, and something very much more like the truth took shape in a thousand minds. It was observed that the mysterious disappearances of children were limited to a certain area, whose boundaries could be accurately defined by a line running from Angers to Pouzanges, from Pouzanges to Vannes, from Vannes to Nantes, and from Nantes back to Angers, and within this affected area there were again places where the disappearances were very frequent. The people marked the danger spots—Machecoul, Tiffauges, Champtocé. They traced lost children to the very doors of the Hôtel de la Suze in Nantes. They called to mind the reputation of Gilles de Rais, the lord of these places ; collected the strange rumours that were in the air concerning his way of life, and proceeded to draw their own conclusions. Suspicion grew to certainty. Grief, rage, and despair, desire for justice, desire for vengeance ; these smouldered throughout the length and breadth of the country, but for a time they did not burst into flame. Dark looks of hatred were turned where Machecoul lifted its accursed towers to the sky, and a silent appeal went up from earth to a Heaven, which seemed too long to bide its time. Yet the people forbore to strike. They were cowed, they were terrified, not without reason, of the Baron de Rais' power. They were weighed down by the prestige of his position and his personality. Nevertheless their day drew on.

The inquiry which was made by the Bishop of Nantes, as a preliminary to the Marshal's trial, consisting, as it does, of depositions taken from the lips of sufferers, illustrates the attitude of the people at this time. It also provides details as to the seduction and capture of the thrice unfortunate children.

Upon the 18 September 1840 :—

"Peronne Loissart, living at La Rochebernart, records upon her oath that, in this present month of September two years ago, the said Lord of Rais, on his return from Vannes, came to lodge at the said place of La Rochebernart, at the hostel of one Jehan Colin. The witness dwelt over against this hostel, and she had a young son of ten years of age who went to school. One of the said lord's people saw him, and came to the said Peronne and asked her to give him her son, saying that he would dress the child finely, and do him all manner of good. Peronne made answer that her son went to school and learned very well, and for this cause she would not have him taken away, upon which Poitu promised and swore that he would send the child to school, and also that he would give Peronne a hundred *souls* for a dress. After this, she promised him the boy. And he took him at once to the Lord de Rais at Jehan Colin's hostel. And the next day, when the said lord came forth, Peronne commended her child to him, who was there also. The lord said nought to her, but he said to Poitu that the child had been well chosen, for he was fair as an angel (*bel comme ung ange*). So the child went with Poitu in the lord's company, riding upon a little horse which Poitu had bought from Jehan Colin. And this woman has since had no news of her child, neither has she seen him any more in the train of the Lord de Rais. Notwithstanding that he passed again and again by La Rochebernart . . . and when she questioned the lord's people where her child was, they told her that perchance he might be at Tiffauges or at Pouzanges."

Here is a description of a horrible old woman employed by the Marshal to entice and kidnap children. There was a little boy of St. Etienne de Montluc—"Aged was this child about eight or nine years: and his father was dead a year since, about the season of Lent. And the child was a very pretty boy, and was called Jamet. And the

witnesses depose that they have neither seen him, nor know what is become of him. And besides, say one of them, about the time of St. John's Day, he met an old woman, with a red countenance, about fifty or sixty years old, hard by the presbytery of St. Stephen. She was coming from Coveran, and had a linen smock over her dress . . . and he saw the said child near the road where he met the old woman, about a bow-shot from the presbytery."

This woman's name was Perrine Martin, but she was known as La Meffraye, and was held in terror far and wide. The wife of Guillaume Fourrages of Port Launey knew her : "And she said about a year since, she had seen an old woman, who wore but a grey kirtle and black hood of little value . . . who had a young boy in her company and said she was bound for Machecoul, and who passed by the gate of Launey with the said child. And after two or three days she was seen returning without the child. So the witness inquired what was become of him, and the woman answered her that she had put him with a good master." For two years and more his mother sought him, and went from place to place for news, but could hear or know nothing.

Indeed, neither this nor many another unfortunate mother could obtain, until too late, tidings of her child and of its fate. Nevertheless these things came to light at the trial of the Marshal de Rais, and were related with terrible detail, for the Marshal made extraordinarily full confession of his deeds, as did also his accomplices, upon whom it appears the task of selecting and beguiling the victims usually fell. Sometimes, however, Gilles de Rais himself would meet a face that charmed him, and would forthwith point it out to his servants. Sometimes he lay in wait and watched, from a point of vantage in his castle, the troops of children who came, attracted by promises of

liberal alms. With fearful acuteness he would single out a bright eye, or a fresh cheek, and mark down every innocent and childish grace.

The children that pleased him were admitted to his presence, and it cannot be shown that one ever left it alive. They were admitted by the score. "Not only ten or twenty," says the Act of Accusation of the Civil Procedure against the Baron, "but thirty, forty, fifty, a hundred, two hundred and more, so many that they certainly cannot be numbered." Each child, as soon as he was fairly trapped, was carried to Gilles de Rais' bedroom, where he was violently thrown to the ground, gagged, and bound. A rope was passed about his neck, and he was suspended at a distance of three feet from the ground, and thus brought to the point of death by strangulation. At a nicely calculated moment, the rope was cut. Then the Baron would take the tortured child up in his arms, and with the monsters who were his accomplices, would smile and speak soft words. Holding the child tenderly upon his knees Gilles kissed him, and bid him be of good cheer—in truth, he had been a little frightened, but now he should be rewarded; they would play together delightfully. Having in this manner amused himself by falsely gaining the confidence of a simple little soul, the Baron had his victim gagged once more, and proceeded to administer torture by sword or dagger. To every horrible idea, every dream of his monstrous imagination, he now gave a shape. He stained himself with blood from forehead to heel—he beheaded, he mutilated, he dismembered, he hacked furiously or cut delicately, as the humour took him. He killed like an artist, sucking his fill of sensuous pleasure with each calculated blow. At wails and shrieks of agony he smiled, and was curious and charmed at the mortal terror of his victim. He confessed that he preferred the sight of torture and of tears, of panic and of blood, to any other pleasure.

When the scene, that he had drawn out as long as possible, came near its inevitable close, he stooped with a fresh, keen, and inquisitive interest over a convulsed and dying child. Wide-eyed and delighted he looked on death, and fed his soul on what it desired.

Then he sent for another child.

When at length he grew a little weary of massacre, the Baron would pause, and ask that the murdered children's heads might be brought and set before him. He would gaze at them intently, take them up, praise their beauty, endeavour to select the loveliest, demanding the opinions of those about him, touching the faces gently with fearful tenderness, kissing the cold lips, and cheeks that yet had a trace of their sweet colour. Their pathetic charm caused his tears to flow, the while he gratified his passionate and awful love of beauty.

All violent emotions end by wearing themselves out, and it was thus with the pleasures of Gilles de Rais. At the first revulsion of feeling, the Marshal flung himself upon his bed, utterly tired out, and was presently lost in the deep sleep of exhaustion.

Then his servants went to and fro softly, and spent hours in clearing away the traces of the orgy. The floors of the chamber they washed with water, and they put a huge log of wood in the open fireplace, as well as some bundles of faggots; on the top of all, they laid the bodies of the victims, and over them again they spread straw and withered leaves, and so lit the pyre. The poor torn dresses and shirts of the children they burnt little by little, that they might not be betrayed by the smell.

With the returning light of the morning the Baron, as likely as not, awoke, to be torn by a fit of agonizing remorse. Upon such an occasion the memory of his evening's indulgence would become horrible to him. He would be haunted by the sight and the smell of blood, by the sound of children's

cries in his ears, and by the vision of little avenging ghosts. He would be overwhelmed by the sense of guilt, and look into the future in a panic of terror. At these times he would call aloud upon God and upon the saints. He was to be seen wandering in the loneliest parts of his castles, or speeding hither and thither upon the public highway, his looks all wild, uttering cries and incoherent words. He gave money in charity, made vows of repentance and expiation, and planned a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

Nevertheless Gilles de Rais returned to his sins, and sank lower and yet lower down in the black and fearful gulf, until he found himself face to face with such a horror as cannot be described; yet he did not draw back, but embraced the unspeakable thing, flinging away for ever the last remnants of his innocence and youth. It is said that the judges at Nantes who listened to his confession, acting under an irresistible impulse, covered the face of the Crucified Christ that hung in the judgment-hall.

He once said to his friends, "There is nobody in the world who knows, or who has the power to understand, all that I have done in my life, and there is nobody in the planet who could do likewise."

The Marshal was at last brought to justice, but not on account of any of the deeds that have hitherto been related. By a public act of revolt, very trifling in comparison with other acts of his life, he put himself at once in the power of his suzerain, the Duke of Brittany, and of the far-reaching arm of the Church.

Gilles de Rais had, at some time, sold his demesne of St. Etienne de Mer Morte to two brothers, Guillaume and Jean de Ferron, who were subject to the Duke of Brittany. The Baron conceived a desire to win back the place by force of arms. Accordingly, upon the morning of the day of Pentecost, he arrived with a small army,

surprised the castle, broke violently into the church, where the people were piously at their prayers, and there and then forced Jean de Ferron to submission. Thus by levying an army, and laying hands upon one of his subjects, Gilles de Rais revolted against the Duke of Brittany.

He violated the immunities of the Church by his sacrilegious attack upon one of its members. For Jean de Ferron was a clerk.

The Duke of Brittany, assisted by his brother Richmont, the Constable of France, took immediate steps against his unruly vassal. Gilles de Rais was compelled to give up St. Etienne de Mer Morte, and to make restitution. As far as the Duke was concerned, the matter would probably have rested there. But as well as his overlord, Gilles had offended Church and State. Three great powers, usually opposed—the King, the Duke, and the Church—were banded together for his undoing.

The Church, represented by Jean de Maléstroït, Bishop of Nantes, took the initiative. After making most diligent inquiry, and with infinite pains collecting evidence, the Bishop joined with Duke Jean V., and arrested the Marshal de Rais at his castle of Machecoul upon the 13th of September 1440.

Jean l'Abbé, captain-at-arms, and Robin Guillaumet, man of law, presented themselves at the castle gate at the head of an armed troop. In his defiant pride, the Marshal made no attempt at resistance or flight. He let down the drawbridge, and set wide the doors.

"I have ever had the intention," he said, "to become a monk; here comes the *Abbé* to whom I must submit myself."

Gilles de Rais was taken, with many of his accomplices, to Nantes, and there imprisoned in the fortress of the *Tour-Neuve*.

Two tribunals were organized—one civil, to try the

crimes of the Marshal de Rais against the State; the other ecclesiastical, to try his offences against the Church. The ecclesiastical trial proved the longer, and the more important. It was conducted by Jean de Maléstroit, Bishop of Nantes, together with Brother Jean Blouyer, of the order of Preaching Friars. The other officers were chosen wisely, and in form. According to the lights of his times it appears that Gilles de Rais was tried with moderation, care, and strict justice.

During the preliminaries of the trial, the Marshal maintained his attitude of defiance. He bore himself disdainfully, forbearing to answer the questions of his judges, or replying to them with a calculated insolence that is almost superb. He was confronted with a crowd of witnesses, poor folk weeping and bemoaning their loss, and demanding justice, but he remained unmoved. A long list of accusations was read to him. Heresy, infanticide, and sacrilege were laid to his charge. He was called upon to reply to these accusations, but refused utterly.

The 15th of October saw the commencement of a change in the Marshal's spirit. He appeared greatly subdued; he recognized the authority of his judges. He acknowledged his guilt in the matter of the church of St. Etienne de Mer Morte. But he went no further as yet.

"No," he declared, "I have never invoked the devil . . . if my accusers can prove that I have either myself invoked, or caused others to invoke evil spirits, that I have made, or caused others to make any bond with them, that I have offered to them sacrifices and oblations, certainly in such a case I offer myself to be burnt alive."

But the judges could not be deceived. Setting aside the overwhelming evidence collected from many witnesses, they had heard confessions from his accomplices, and were thus possessed of details enough to condemn the Baron

thrice over. Yet to obtain more light still, and proof incontrovertible, they decided, according to the manner of their times, to apply to the accused the trial by question or torture.

Then Gilles de Rais broke down altogether in his attempt to carry things with a high hand. He declared himself ready to make full acknowledgment and confession of his crime, which confession he did indeed make to Jean Pregent, Bishop of St. Brieuc, and Pierre de l'Hospital of Brittany, who were deputed by the court to hear it. The Baron was questioned upon the use of the black magic and the invocation of demons, upon child-murder and bloody sacrifices, and in all things he bitterly acknowledged his culpability.

"Where and how long since did this way of life begin?" asked the Bishop.

"At the castle of Champtocé," Gilles answered, "but how long ago I cannot tell. It was in the year of the death of my grandfather."

"And who taught you to commit such crimes?"

"Nobody. I was guided by my own imagination. The thought was mine alone; it came to me in my dreams and through my pleasures, and my own taste for forbidden joys. In all that I have done, I have wished only to assuage my desires."

The Inquisitors, barely satisfied, continued to question him as to his motives. But Gilles de Rais cried:

"Hélas Monseigneur, vous vous tourmentez et moy avecques."

And the Bishop:

"No. I do not torment myself, but I marvel at what you tell me, so much that I may hardly believe it, therefore I desire to have from you the pure truth concerning these causes of which I have often spoken."

Then Gilles said:

"In truth, there was no other cause, end, or intention, but what I have told you. What I have told you is grave enough to bring about the deaths of ten thousand men."

Francisco Prelati was examined in the same place and revealed what he knew. Before Prelati was taken back to his prison, Gilles de Rais turned and looked long at him, weeping and sobbing the while. He embraced Prelati very tenderly and said :

"Farewell, Francisco, my dear ; never more shall we meet in this world. I pray God that He will give you good patience and knowledge ; and be certain that if you have good patience and hope in God, that we shall meet in the great joy of Paradise. Pray to God for me, and I will pray for you."

The extraordinary passion of ardour which Gilles de Rais had lavished upon his life of crime, he now turned to the business of a complete repentance. The artist in him was still broad awake, and the scenes which are to follow were arranged with a masterly knowledge of effect and a consummate dramatic fitness. His sincerity is not to be doubted. Indeed he knew very well that the day of subterfuge was irrevocably past. But quite apart from this, he gave himself over to confession and penitence. His soul was bathed in a new and poignant emotion. He confessed, he wept and he prayed, he exhausted himself in the task of self-revelation and self-abnegation. And it is legitimate to suppose that in a certain sense he found pleasure in a novel sensation. He was supported throughout by that lively faith, which had ever been a prominent element of his personality, and the strange curiosity that had governed his life was with him till the end, making the supreme moment one of breathless interest rather than of terror.

The Marshal appeared in court upon the 22 October

1440, and kneeling upon the ground, in sight and hearing of a great crowd, he repeated and amplified his confession. He spoke with the greatest sorrow and bitterness, his voice broken and the tears running down his face. For a long time he spoke, whilst fear and horror held the court. At the end he said :

“ O parents of children, be careful that you do not rear them delicately, nor in the sweets of idleness. . . . Idleness, delicate meats, the use of heated wines—these are the causes of my faults and of my crimes. O God my Creator, and my Beloved Redeemer, I ask Thy mercy and Thy pardon. And you parents and friends of those children whom I have cruelly done to death, you whom I have hurt and against whom I have sinned, wherever you are and whoever you may be, as you are Christian people, and faithful to Jesus Christ, upon my knees and with these tears I beseech you to give me the succour of your pious prayers.”

He was silent, and amongst those that heard him there arose a great stir. Despair, astonishment, anger, pity, strove for the mastery, and the crowd became tumultuous as a troubled sea.

The trial was at an end. The sentence of excommunication was delivered, but in virtue of his great repentance the Marshal was received again, as he desired, into the “ bosom of the Church our Mother.” He was then removed to the civil court, that his death-sentence might be pronounced, and here he once again repeated his confession. Then Pierre de l’Hospital, President of Brittany, arose and pronounced against the accused first, that he should pay a fine of fifty thousand *livres* for his rebellion against the Duke of Brittany. For his further crimes the Marshal must be hung, and burnt at the stake in the meadow of La Biesse. The judge turned to Gilles de Rais :

“ Cry for mercy to God,” he said, “ and make yourself

ready to die as best you may, heartily repenting you of your sins. To-morrow at eleven your sentence is executed."

The Marshal in his last speech desired three things. His servants Henriet and Poitu had likewise been condemned to death, and Gilles asked that as they had lived and sinned together, they might together go to execution; moreover, that he, as the greatest sinner of all, might first meet death; for otherwise, he said, "my servants might suppose that I should escape punishment and so fall into despair." Secondly, he prayed that before the flames had devoured it, his body might be recovered, and buried in a church that he should choose; and thirdly, he begged that the Bishop of Nantes would sanction a general procession, on the morrow, of the people of the town, who should pray to God that both Gilles and his servants might be filled with a lively faith in their salvation.

To these requests the judge acceded. The Marshal returned to his prison. The crowd slowly dispersed, and immediately preparation was made for the execution.

At nine o'clock upon the following morning a demonstration occurred, which illustrates the proverbial fickleness of crowds of all times, as well as the action of those strong emotional waves so characteristic of the Middle Ages. An immense concourse of people—monks, priests, merchants, nobles, and commons—moved through the streets in solemn procession, singing psalms and praying aloud and fervently for the salvation of the souls of the Baron de Rais, and of his comrades. By virtue of the strange quality of suggestion, the entire multitude was presently worked up to a high pitch of emotion. The same persons who had so lately cried "justice and vengeance" upon a monster of iniquity, were now possessed by overwhelming pity for a condemned man.

The crowd at length collected in the meadows of La Biesse. Thither came also the Marshal de Rais to his

death. As he gazed upon the mournful pomp and circumstance about him, and saw by the gibbet and the piled faggots the manner in which he should die, his bearing was grave but firm. The few moments that remained to him he spent in speaking comfortably to his servants Henriet and Poitu, exhorting them to be strong and virtuous in the hour of extreme agony. He assured them that God Almighty is always more ready to pardon than is the sinner to ask His pardon. He said : "Love God, be sorry for your sins ; I pray you be strong and be patient for a little—for the time will not be long—our souls shall be separated from our bodies, but we shall meet in Paradise."

Henriet and Poitu thanked him. They were willing to die with their master. The affection which this man obtained from those about him was very remarkable.

Then Gilles de Rais knelt down, and joining his hands, he prayed God to show him His mercy : "Lord," he said, "do not punish me after my sins, but pardon me according to Thy great mercy." Then he commended himself to St. James, whom he revered greatly, and lastly to St. Michael, thus : "When my soul shall depart from my body, be thou pleased to receive it and present it before God. And thou, O Lord, receive it in Thy mercy."

After he had said this, he mounted upon a pile of faggots that was made ready, for the time was come. They put a stool beneath his feet and a rope about his neck ; then they drew away the support, so that Gilles de Rais hung in space.

In the last moment Henriet and Poitu spoke with him : "Now is the hour," they said, "to prove thyself a strong and valiant knight, in the love of God. Remember the Passion, that took place for our redemption."

Then great flames rushed up into the air, for they had lit the faggots, and burnt the rope, so that the Marshal's

body fell into the fire. But certain young ladies of his lineage rescued it, and bore it away for burial, weeping the while and making great lamentation.

Thus perished the Baron Gilles de Rais, Marshal of France, aged thirty-six years, in the height of his manly vigour, in the year of grace 1440.

But that is not quite the whole story. The crowd that witnessed his execution, having exercised the entire gamut of painful agitating emotion, to the point of exhaustion, dispersed, and its members returned to their homes, where it is recorded that the heads of families proceeded to administer sound chastisement to their children, that the whole thing might be properly impressed upon their minds.

It was a salutary consummation without doubt, but considering all the circumstances of the case, somewhat whimsical.

CHAPTER VII

“AMOUR DE GRÂCE”

THIS study of Agnes Sorel is here introduced for two reasons. In the first place, it illustrates an aspect of Court life, a phase of the world into which the Maid was called. It is an aspect that did not appeal to her, which had no place in her philosophy, yet it had considerable bearing upon her career, and forms a part of the picture of her times.

Secondly, the study is intended to complete the tale of women who had power to influence Charles VII. of France. Yolande of Aragon, Joan of Arc, and Agnes Sorel, their stories are bound up together with that of their King and their country. Moreover, the character of Agnes was, in some degree, complementary to that of Joan.

There is one light of the sun, another of the moon. Joan of Arc shone as the light of the day upon her world of work and war, of colour and of sound ; her world so varied, with its good men and its bad, its great faith and its great unbelief, its powers of endurance and its taste for luxurious idleness. Her clear beams laid bare justice and injustice, truth and deception, bringing energizing power and drying up corruption. Agnes Sorel, according to her destiny, cast around her the pale glow of the moon—passionate, uncertain, waxing and waning, full of strange shadows, yet discovering the true path, and shining persistently for the guidance of beloved feet.

Joan of Arc loved God and France, Agnes Sorel loved

Charles the King—and again Charles, and once more the King. She knew that his welfare was the welfare of his country. The tie between these women was that of a great and common love, differing in kind (for one indeed loved after the flesh, and the other after the spirit), but equal in superb intensity. They are associated therefore, and rightly associated, in the first achievement of their age, the salvation of France, and the regeneration of the King of France.

Looking back upon an era long closed, and upon a series of accomplished events, this association fits so naturally into the scheme of things ; it is so patent to the retrospective glance how the mantle of the Maid fell upon the shoulders of the lady of pleasure, to be worn bravely, but with a far other grace, that the mind is tempted to supply the fact of an actual friendship, a collusion, an understanding between the two. There is not the slightest historical foundation for any belief of the kind. Although Joan of Arc and Agnes Sorel were near of an age, although at the time of the former's arrival at the Court of Charles the Dauphin at Chinon, the latter was in all likelihood occupied in some capacity or another about that Court, there is no trace of communication, an interview, or even a word exchanged between them.

Landor's "Imaginary Conversation" is indeed, for all that is certainly known, entirely imaginary. Nevertheless, there is in this excessively rare sort of historical imagination a quality of inspiration which, whilst it ignores recorded fact, transcends it, going direct to the spirit of the whole matter. Landor's bold yet delicately beautiful conception is invaluable :—

" Jeanne d'Arc is introduced into the presence of Agnes Sorel, mistress of the French king, Charles VII.

Agnes. If a boy could ever be found so beautiful and so bashful, I should have taken you for a boy about fifteen

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AGNES SOREL

PAINTED IN THE CHARACTER OF THE VIRGIN BY JEAN FOQUET. (FROM PART OF A TRIPTIQUE
IN THE ANTWERP MUSEUM)

years old. Really, and without flattery, I think you very lovely.

Jeanne. I shall be far from loveliness, even in my own eyes, until I execute the will of God in the deliverance of His people.

Agnes. Never hope it.

Jeanne. The deliverance that is never hoped seldom comes. We conquer by hope and trust.

Agnes. Be content to have humbled the proud islanders. Oh how I rejoice that a mere child has done so !

Jeanne. A child of my own age, or younger, chastized the Philistines, and smote down the giant their leader. . . .

Agnes. You are not afraid ?

Jeanne. Healthy and strong, but always too timorous, a few seasons ago I fled away from the lowing of a young steer, if he ran opposite ; I waited not the butting of a full-grown kid ; the barking of a house-dog at our neighbour's gate turned me pale as ashes, and (shame upon me) I scarcely dared kiss the child when he called on me with burning tongue in the pestilence of a fever.

Agnes. No wonder ! A creature in a fever ! What a frightful thing !

Jeanne. It would be were it not so piteous. . . .

Agnes. Ah, this is courage ! . . .

Jeanne. The courage of the weaker sex, inherent in us all, but as deficient in me as in any, until an infant taught me my duty by its cries. Yet never have I quailed in the front of the fight, where I directed our ranks against the bravest. God pardon me if I err ! but I believe His Spirit flamed within my breast, strengthened my arm, and led me on to victory. . . . O Lady Agnes !

Agnes. Why fixest thou thine eyes upon me so piteously ? Why sobbest thou ? . . . Speak ! tell me.

Jeanne. I must. This also is commanded me. You believe me innocent ?

Agnes. In truth I do ; why then look abashed ? Alas ! alas ! Could I mistake the reason ? I spoke of innocence. Leave me—leave me. Return another time. Follow thy vocation.

Jeanne. Agnes Sorel ! Be thou more than innocent if innocence is denied thee. In the name of the Almighty, I call on thee to earn His mercy.

Agnes. I implore it incessantly, by day, by night.

Jeanne. Serve Him as thou mayest best serve Him, and thy tears, I promise thee, shall soon be less bitter than those that are dropping on this jewelled hand and on the rude one which has dared to press it.

Agnes. What can I—what can I do ?

Jeanne. Lead the King back to his kingdom.

Agnes. The King is in France.

Jeanne. No, no, no.

Agnes. Upon my word of honour.

Jeanne. And at such a time, O Heaven ! in idleness and sloth !

Agnes. Indeed no. He is busy (this is the hour) in feeding and instructing two young hawks. . . . Is he in danger ? Oh ! You see all things—is he ? is he ? is he ?

Jeanne. From none but you.

Agnes. God, it is evident, has given to thee alone the power of rescuing him and France. . . . He has bestowed on thee the mightiness of virtue.

Jeanne. Believe, and prove thy belief, that He has left no little of it still in thee.

Agnes. When we have lost our chastity, we have lost all in His sight and in man's. But man is unforgiving—God is merciful.

Jeanne. I am so ignorant, I know only a part of my duties ; yet those that my Maker has taught me, I am earnest to perform. He teaches me that divine love has

less influence over the heart than human ; He teaches me that it ought to have more ; finally, He commands me to announce to thee, not His anger, but His will.

Agnes. Declare it ; oh, declare it ! I do believe His holy word is deposited in thy bosom.

Jeanne. Encourage the King to lead his vassals to the field ! ”

The Maid at length prevails :—

“*Agnes.* I tremble before that countenance severely radiant ; I sink amid that calm more appalling than the tempest. Look not into my heart with those gentle eyes ! Oh, how they penetrate ! They ought to see no sin, sadly must it pain them.

Jeanne. Think not of me : pursue thy destiny : save France.

Agnes. Glorious privilege ! divine appointment ! Is it thus, O my Redeemer, my crimes are visited ? Come with me, blessed Jeanne ! Come instantly with me to the King ; come to him whom thy virtue and valour have rescued.”

Perchance it was even after this manner that Agnes Sorel embraced her vocation, in which she steadfastly persevered until the day of her death, although the joy and the exaltation of resolve too soon faded quite away. “Life is but sighs,” she said, “and when they cease ‘tis over.”

Agnes Sorel was born in or about the year 1410, at the village of Fromenteau in Touraine. She was the daughter of one Jean Sorel, who was the lord of Coudun, and vassal, friend, and adviser to the Count of Clermont. Her mother was the Dame Catherine of Maignelais.

She was reared in an atmosphere of the purest loyalty to the Armagnac party, and was nourished upon ancient and honourable traditions, together with sentiments of patriotism. In her girlhood she entered the household and service of the young Queen of Sicily, a lady of about her own

age, and equally devoted to the national party. Isabel, daughter and heiress of the Duke of Lorraine, and wife of that amiable loiterer, René of Anjou, early entered the arena of public life and high politics, from which the ladies of her day were by no means excluded.

Through the evil fortunes of war, the King of Sicily passed a period of captivity at Dijon in Burgundy. During this time his wife administered his estates and her own with surprising strength and ability. It is likely that Agnes, her maid of honour, was by her side, all the while instructing herself in the arts of government, for according to the Chronicle of Jean Chartier, the Queen-Duchess conceived an extreme affection for the young Lady of Fromenteau. "And the Queen of Sicily did nourish her from her youth up, and did love her so well that she gave her fine furnishings and goodly heritage," says the chronicler.

Agnes had reached her seventeenth or eighteenth year when, according to the computation of most historians, she came to the Court of Charles VII. at Bourges, following in the train of her friend and mistress, Isabel of Anjou and Lorraine.

She was then in the first flower of that sweet beauty destined to acquire an ascendancy over so many hearts, glowing with the soft bloom of youth, health, and an untroubled mind. She was intelligent beyond her years by reason of her education, inexperienced in the ways of a court, gentle and eager, full of curiosity and the capacity for enjoyment; brilliant, passionate, religious, a child in years, with a woman's head and a woman's heart. Hers was a nature perhaps more typical of the Renaissance than of the Middle Ages—a nature which would appear to be lost to modern times, at all events among the peoples of the West. It combined freshness with ripeness, simplicity with a self-knowledge and self-possession singularly complete; inexperience with an infinite capacity for joy and for suffering.

Thus young, Agnes Sorel began her life in the world, and making her reverence before the princelet of Bourges, looked into the eyes of her fate.

There exist at this day two authentic portraits of the Damoiselle de Fromenteau, as she was known during her first years at Court, as well as the effigy upon her tomb at Loches, which has suffered much alteration at the hands of restorers. From this tomb, also, there was obtained a tress of the lady's hair, which is now preserved as a relic. From these materials it is possible to evoke but a wan shadow of that beauty which was once so radiant. Agnes, it would seem, was unusually fair, with a broad forehead, bright blue eyes, shaded with somewhat drooping lids and long lashes. She had a sensitive mouth, with extremely beautiful teeth, a throat and arms exquisitely white, withal, and above all, an invincible grace, a nameless charm of manner, an expression so vivacious and so sympathetic that her whole personality appeared as a delightful and irresistible harmony. To this outward perfection she added the attraction of “the most gentle spirit in all the world, and her conversation was so much above that of other women that she was looked upon as a wonder.”

Little marvel that the King loved her. Fatigued by the piety of his consort, and not at all entertained by her admirable submission, it was his habit to find diversion among the courtiers of her household, which was brilliant, and ordered according to the rules and fancies of chivalry. Its administration was graceful and picturesque to exaggeration. Marie of Anjou cherished next to her religion and her King, her brother René, the versatile King of Sicily, whose hand may be traced in the invention of elaborate gaieties, tournaments, and controversies of love which succeeded each other incessantly, ostensibly under her auspices. Through the mazes of pleasure the beautiful Duchess of Lorraine took her way, a bright and particular star, with

the young, fair Agnes glowing in her orbit. In spite of wars and rumours of wars, in spite of famine and dire disease, of troops of armed marauders devastating the land with fire, murder, and rapine, of Church scandal and State division, of barbarous wrongs and revenges, and deeds done in the dark, injustice and cruelties perpetrated in high places, with doom hanging over their heads, their country rushing headlong to its ruin, and grim poverty knocking importunate at their very castle gates, this group of knights and noblemen, poets and pretty pages, with exquisite and delicate ladies, passed their days in the pursuit of pleasure. Among the sweet airs and green trees of Touraine they lived, governed by no other laws than those found in the code of chivalry—modified, let it be understood, revised and applied somewhat according to individual interpretation.

Two distinctly opposing moral principles divided public opinion at this period of the Age of Chivalry. The first, upon which the members of the Court of Charles VII. laid no particular stress, may be identified with the doctrine of the Church, and recognized as having a preponderating influence in the formation of the law. The passion of love was regarded as a fatal snare, a peril of the flesh, a pitfall which inevitably engulfed virtue. Its delights, even as sanctified by matrimony, were looked upon with suspicion, stigmatized as dangerous. Celibacy, although not directly enjoined, was considered the higher, the infinitely preferable state.

The second principle was concerned with the deification of womanhood. Its holders extended their respect and adoration of the sex into a regular cult, worshipping its grace and beauty. Love, they declared to be the spur to all noble action, the mainspring of progress, the source of virtue, not to be bound by the strait ties of marriage, or limited by any other limits. Love was wide as the world, longer than life. High priests of the religion maintained, indeed, that the married condition was incompatible with true love.

The “Holy State,” it would appear, was on all hands somewhat at a discount.

It is probable that this curious doctrine was never taken entirely seriously, even in the fifteenth century. It never imposed itself upon actual courts of law (as has been stated) or received the sanction of magistrates, nor in any way affected the machinery of the real world. It was confined to a coterie, though to a very large coterie; it was no more than a fashion, but it was an excessively widespread and popular fashion. It was the delightful study of young men and young women of elevated social position, arbiters of taste, and oracles of elegance, who invested the religion of *Woman* and *Love* with a thousand subtleties, affectations, and paradoxical forms, or attenuated it into theories literary and metaphysical.

Howbeit, these theories did not grow spectre thin and die away, without abutting into something of the nature of solid practice. It all came, in point of fact, to an odd though convenient compromise and the recognition of two kinds of love—first *L'Amour de Dette*, the orthodox variety; and secondly, *L'Amour de Grace*, a sentiment of a less domestic character.

Evidently this state of things was fostered by the general conditions of life in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The times were full of danger and disquietude. A roaming, irresponsible existence of adventure was the rule; every day noblemen and gentlemen donned their harness and rode away from their homes never to return. Casual relationships of camps and marches and perilous journeys were death to the quiet sanctity of family life. The names of natural children of men of the highest rank strew the pages of the histories of the period. The custom of marrying young children, though not peculiar to the fifteenth century, was at that time very common, and almost reduced to a system. The transaction of such

alliances was of course merely conventional, the unfortunate little principals crowing unconsciously in their cradles, or, as was not infrequently the case, having not yet opened their eyes upon this world of woe.

Who can marvel, under the circumstances, at the revenges of nature ignored? Courses of action without number, such as that adopted by Charles VII. in regard to Agnes Sorel, are explained, if they cannot be excused.

Although, as it seems, Agnes Sorel and Joan of Arc were born within a year or two of each other, the influence of Agnes at the Court was not contemporary with that of the Maid, but followed it. There is some disagreement among historians as to the dates of the chief events of Agnes Sorel's life. The following computation is probably as accurate as any.

Between 1410 and 1415 it places the birth of Agnes Sorel. When about fifteen years old (1425-30) she entered the service of Isabel of Lorraine. From 1435-44 she certainly was at the Court of Charles VII., occupying, during a part of that time, the position of maid of honour to the Queen. In 1436 her eldest child, Marie, was born; Charlotte, her second, in 1438; Jeanne, her third, in 1445. In 1444 Agnes Sorel received high rank and a great place at Court. In 1450 she died.

The monk Jean Chartier, writer of the Chronicle of St. Denis for Charles VII.'s reign, has a rather curious chapter, in which he records the death of Agnes Sorel, touches upon her life at Court, and her relationship with the King, which he describes, quite unconvincingly, as one of a Platonic character. Probably he considered such a point of view incumbent on him as official recorder of the reign. He writes: "Now Agnes was in the Queen's service for the space of five years or thereabouts, where she enjoyed profane pleasure of all sorts, and the joys and pastimes of the world—that is to say, in the wearing of rich and

wondrous attires, head gear, robes, furs, necklets of gold and jewels. This besides other pleasures, for she was young and beautiful ; wherefore it became the common report that the King charged himself with her maintenance and entertainment, for in these days the world is more ready to speak evil than to speak good. Nevertheless, it is true that often it was not the King's will that the said Agnes should keep so great a state, but it was her own pleasure, therefore he let it pass, so far as he might. When the King went to devise with ladies, even in such times as the Queen was absent, there were present a multitude of persons—and never a one saw him so much as touch the lady beneath the chin. But he returned to his own place after such licit pleasures as a King may enjoy. And in the evening all went to their own apartments, and the said Agnes likewise went to hers. . . . And if indeed the said Agnes did any evil, if indeed she had guilty relations with the King, the which was in no way to be perceived, the same was done cautiously and in secret, she being at that time in the service of the Queen of Sicily, before she served the Queen of France, with whom she dwelt for some years. These rumours concerning evil examples and these publications of evil, when they came to the knowledge of the said Agnes (who was surnamed the Lady of Beauté), for the regret and sorrow which she had, she was overcome by contrition and repentance for sins.”

Another chronicler makes it plain how extremely well defined was her position at Court : “ And for that it was seen at this time that the King was very pensive, and that he brooded overmuch and had little joy, and that it was expedient to cheer him ; by the deliberation of his Council (without his seal) it was told the Queen that she would do well to endure that the said lord (Charles) should make good cheer with the said lady (Agnes), not showing thereat any displeasure, which thing the good

Queen did, and counterfeited bravely, although much it grieved her."

Poor lady! Small marvel indeed that it grieved her, and that she should, upon one occasion at least, open her bosom to a fellow-sufferer.

"In this season the Duchess of Burgundy, very greatly accompanied, came before the King of France. And the Queen did her very great honour in private; for both of them were princesses, already somewhat old, who loved quiet, and it is sure they both suffered the self-same pain and malady which is called jealousy, and that they spoke much in secret of their passions and their griefs. And indeed there was much appearance of reason in their suspicions, for the King had lately raised up by his favour a lady, poor though noble, the which was called Agnes Sorel, and had made her so powerful and triumphant that her condition was to be compared to that of great Princesses of the Realm. And in very truth she was one of the most beautiful women that I have ever seen, and, in her manner, she did great service to the kingdom of France. She brought before the King young men-at-arms, and gentle squires and companions, by whom the King was afterwards well served."

With the year 1444, longed-for peace began its reign in all the land of France, whilst the fair Agnes began hers at the Court of Charles. The King's people from end to end of his dominions were sick to death of an age long and horrible war. They expressed their relief at its termination in a nationally characteristic manner, and came out of their cities in joyous troops simply to enjoy the country air, prepared themselves for pilgrimages, celebrated great services of thanksgiving in their churches and their cathedrals, diverted themselves with all manner of masques and processions, jousts, and junketings; in a word, vindicated their reputation as a race at once most gay and most religious. Long neglected fields and gardens were

made to flourish, lost roads reappeared and were enlivened by continual traffic, old enmities were patched up and new friendships made. Agriculture, industry, commerce, awoke from their death-like sleep. A little money flowed into the King's treasury and gave new life to the Court, which was not removed to Paris, but continued upon a more bounteous scale its graceful diversions upon the flowery banks of the Loire, taking short and pleasant journeys from Amboise to Tours, from Tours to Chinon, from Chinon to Angers, and back to Tours.

Agnes Sorel bloomed the chosen rose of roses in all that brilliant garden that flourished in the suddenly golden weather—as sung by the charming poet of Orleans :—

“Le temps a laissé son manteau
 De vent de froideur et de pluie
 Et s'est vêtu de broderie,
 De soleil rayant clair et beau ;
 Il n'y a beste ne oiseau
 Qu'en son jargon ne chante ou crie.
 Le temps a laissé son manteau. . . .”

There were young princesses at Court, amongst them Margaret of Scotland, sweet blue-stocking, lover of poets, and wife of the Dauphin. In these times she went riding upon a first of May down the scented lanes, and through the fields. There went with her a noble company. The Queen of France with René's wife, she of Lorraine, and their young daughter (another Margaret, of Anjou, later Margaret of England), and also Agnes Sorel. They rode out to celebrate May morning, and gathered hawthorn to carry with them to the town. After them followed a cavalcade of young knights, and ladies with pages at their bridles, and there were there poets that rode unbonneted, and sang as they rode :—

“En celui temps, je fus jeune et enrièvre,
 Servant dames à Tours a Mehun-sur-Yèvres.”

Three hundred courtiers in all went out that day.

Beauty, youth, and love were in the ascendant and celebrated their rites every hour, and spread their delightful feasts. Marriages were prepared with pomp and brilliant display, Margaret of Anjou was fêted before her departure for England. Ferry de Vaudemont married Yolande, a princess of Lorraine. Charles, Count of Maine, Isabel of Luxembourg; and the Constable Arthur of Richemont chose his third wife, Catherine of Luxembourg, sister to the Count of St. Pol.

In these times Charles gave to Agnes Sorel the castle of Beauté on the Marne, a romantic manor built by Charles V. near to Plaisance. He did this, says the chronicler, '*Afin qu'elle fut dame de Beauté de nom comme de fait.*' Taking more and more delight in her company, he created for her an establishment at Loches, with a suite of apartments near his own, providing her with a suitable state, and covering her publicly with honours.

"The love which the King bore to the Lady Agnes, as every man bore witness, was for the sweet follies of youth, the happy ways and the joyousness, with the honest pretty speech that was hers; and also, among the fair things that are on the earth, she was the freshest and the fairest."

She loved beautiful clothes and fine stuffs, all that was bright and delicate. Jacques Cœur introduced into France the art of gem-cutting, and brought from Venice and from Constantinople skilled workmen to release the imprisoned lights from emeralds, the glow of the ruby, and the rosy flash of diamonds. He presented the fair Agnes with the first set of cut diamonds made in France, and she wore them mingled with pearls as a zone about her form, clasped upon her bosom.

She used fine linen for her garments instead of the, till then, universal Flanders wool, and adorned them with lace and needlework. The Queen of Sicily and other royal ladies followed her example. A new custom was inaugu-

rated and duly recorded by august Benedictine chroniclers. Henceforward the King's daughters were to be provided with such garments, as a part of their marriage portion, this not to be detrimental to their dowry of two hundred thousand gold crowns and appanage in lands. Agnes attired herself in brocades of green or crimson, stiff with gold, and dearly bought from Italian merchants. She, and the ladies of her times, wore high-pointed head-dresses veiled in floating gossamers. They rode out to take the air upon richly caparisoned palfreys, or put to the ground feet in shoes exaggeratedly pointed, and lavishly decorated with jewels.

They took their way through mysterious streets, narrow, crooked ; with adventure waiting at every corner, eager like a hound in leash ; between carved and turreted houses, through arches and dark alleys. They were accompanied by lords and knights, varlets and fresh-faced pages. They passed by soldiers in mailed coats, monks both black and white, parti-coloured jugglers, peasants and gipsies, staid citizens, or processions of pilgrims. The bells rang joyously for a festival, or tolled for the dead.

Again they hunted in the royal forests, sweeping through the glades to the sound of the horn, riding in parties or in pairs, giving themselves to the pleasures of love, or to the delights of the chase.

A letter has been preserved, written by Agnes, addressed to Mademoiselle de Bonneville—Mademoiselle de Bonneville of place and family unknown to history :—

“ TO MADEMOISELLE DE BONNEVILLE, MY GOOD FRIEND,
—Mademoiselle, my good friend, I commend myself to you
with all my heart. I pray you to give to Christopher, who
is the bearer of these, my grey kirtle lined with white, and
all pairs of gloves which you may find in the house, for the
said Christopher has lost my little coffer. An it please you

besides, receive from him my greyhound Carpet, the which keep straitly by your side, and do not suffer him to go to the chase with any one, for he obeys neither call nor whistle, and therefore would be as good as lost, which to me would be great pain, and no pleasure to my good friend to whom I have commended him. Praying God that he will keep you in His grace, your very good friend, AGNES."

Again to the same lady she writes :—

" My good friend, yesterday we gave chase to a wild boar, of which your little dog Robin found the traces.—Your good friend Agnes."

She was gentle and compassionate towards the poor, and once sent a petition on their behalf to the Provost of Chesnaye-ez-Bois :—

" MONSIEUR LE PREVOST,—I have heard and understand that certain men of La Chesnaye have been dismissed by you upon suspicion of having taken certain wood from the forest of Chesnaye. Upon which, I have heard it said, that divers of the said people are poor and needy persons. Monsieur le Prevost, it is not very well they should be pursued in the said matter—in which your acting without delay will be pleasant to your good mistress, AGNES "

At the time when Agnes Sorel came to be near the King, taking up her destiny, she gave to the Chapter of Loches a great golden cross, and also a silver statue, gilded, of St. Mary Magdalene. An inscription was about the base : " In honour and reverence of St. Mary Magdalene, the noble Lady of Beauté has given this image to the Church of the Castle of Loches, in which image is enshrined a tress of hair of the said saint ; and this was in the year one thousand four hundred and forty-four."

Charles VII., insignificant in his person, and of a shrinking disposition, did not shine in a brilliant crowd, therefore his pleasure lay in the select companionship of a few, or

better still, in the delightful sympathy of a single mind. Retired from the movement and the stir attending the pleasures of his courtiers, he would spend long hours in conversation with the beautiful Agnes. It may be supposed that they talked about many things, and above all, discussed together the welfare of France. At all events, it is certain that under her influence the King turned his mind honestly and seriously to matters of national importance.

He made and maintained an honourable peace with England, strengthening the bond of amity by a powerful knot, the marriage of King Henry VI. to the Princess Margaret of Anjou. His relations with Burgundy were peaceful and profitable. Negotiations with the Duke of Brittany and other great feudal lords were continually carried out with skill, dignity, and tact. Embassies came and went from foreign courts, and in all their dealings the King of France held his own in matters of diplomacy. He put down seditions and rebellions with a firm hand, and seized the smallest opportunity to enlarge his frontiers. He planned and achieved reforms in the army, reforms in matters concerning the coinage, reforms in laws touching the protection of peaceful citizens. He patronized commercial and industrial schemes, developing the resources of the country and making his influence felt over the Continent. His better self, being discovered to him at last, it gained the ascendancy amongst the elements of his complex character, and happily maintained its position long enough to ensure the reconstruction of France, which had been torn in pieces, and to secure her place among the nations.

And who brought to the King the knowledge of his better self, who believed in him, sympathized with him, watched over him, loved him ?

“Gentille Agnes, plus de los tu mérite.
La cause étant de France recouvrer
Que tout ce que en cloître peut ouvrir
Close nonain ni en désert hermite.”

Thus wrote, and thought, in after years, King Francis the First. The powers of darkness were denied their due, and Lucifer was constrained to admit, as he admits it in Goethe's legend, "I will the evil, and achieve the good." Yet in the unalterable nature of things, sin remains the same, and inevitably not only brings, but is its own punishment. Therefore in the tragic life of Agnes Sorel, the sweetest things were touched with bitterness. Weariness, Sorrow, and Shame sat continually at the banquet, and Time watched near at hand, ready to snatch the veil from their grey faces, leaving their horror bare.

The Lady of Beauté trembled even as she smiled, for indeed she had all to fear. Suspicion, jealousy, slander, were in the air she breathed ; plots and intrigues were conceived to compass her death or her disgrace. She went in terror of the moods and the wayward fickleness of her lover. At the best, the apprehension of advancing age and loss of beauty hung over her like a cloud. Her very generosities were doomed to bring her bitterness. The lady was sweetly kind, and loved to bestow her charities and use her influence for others. This she did, too often not to her own advantage. She introduced into the Court her young cousin, Antoinette de Maignelais, who was as beautiful as she herself had been, and possessed a guile that Agnes never dreamed of. This lady succeeded in insinuating herself into the affection of the King, and disloyal, aspired to usurp the position of her patroness. Alas, poor Lady of Beauté, Antoinette was not her only rival ; there were also two fair sisters, the demoiselles de Villequiers, maids of honour, first to the Princess Margaret of Scotland, and afterwards to the Queen. They enjoyed a position at Court, and received the favours of the King. Gifts are put down to them in the roll of the King's accounts—this among others :—

" To Nicolas Palmier of Valence, the penultimate day of October, for XVIII ells of black brocaded satin, bought

from Regnauld Bernard, merchant, living at Tours, which cloth the said lord gave, at the time of his last parliament of Tours, to Mademoiselle Marguerite de Villequiers, maid of honour to the Queen, at the price of iij crowns the ell.”

Agnes Sorel certainly shared with others, though she still dominated, the King's affections. Nor need the liberalities which he continued to shower upon her be taken to indicate any important revival of her influence, or of his passion. It is quite true that he bestowed upon her the domain of Roquebeziers in Rouergue, that of Bois-Trousseau, and that of Issoudun in Berry. As late as the year 1449 he presented her with Vernon-sur-Seine recovered from the English, and with the lands of Anneville near Jumièges. She enjoyed a pension of 3000 *livres*, as well as other signs of royal generosity. But it is well known that this kind of marked increase of favours may be but a whip wherewith to goad a lagging interest, and in 1448-49 the star of Agnes was already past its zenith.

In 1449 the King went to fight in Normandy and left her in Touraine, for she was soon to give him a fourth child. She was melancholy and full of sorrowful foreboding, pining because of the distance that separated her from Charles, whom she loved, and agitated by mysterious rumours of danger, oppressed by the heavy atmosphere of intrigue that daily thickened about her. She seemed to see upon all sides her enemies and the King's, grim and menacing, and was terrified. Where was the Dauphin, she asked herself, that he did not fight for his country in Normandy, and what was he about?

At length she fell into a panic, whether groundless or well founded none can say. In the short, cold days of January (1450) she left the castle of Loches to go to the King, who was at Harfleur. She hastened through the wild and wintry land, braving the dangers of thieves and enemies and savage beasts. Weak and full of fears, she pursued her

way, suffering the privations of rough travel, spending horrible sleepless nights in strange places on the road. At length, in the Abbey of Jumièges, says the Chronicle of Jean Chartier, "The King found . . . the fair Agnes, who came there, as she said, to warn the King, and to tell him that certain of his enemies had the desire to betray him, and to deliver him into the hands of his ancient foes the English—of which the King took no account, but contented himself with laughing at it."

Agnes was taken to the manor of Mesnil, the farm or little pleasure-house of the abbots of Jumièges, and for her sake it was thenceforward called Mesnil-la-Belle. Here she gave birth to a daughter, and some few days afterwards died, some say from poison, but others say of a broken heart.

"She was in deep contrition and repentance of her sins," writes Chartier, "and she bethought herself of Mary Magdalene, who was also a great sinner. In her pain she called upon God and the Virgin Mary to her aid; then, like a good Catholic, after that she had received the sacraments, she asked for her book of hours, that she might read there certain lines of St. Bernard, the which she had written with her own hand. Then the said Agnes spoke to all her maidens, and said it was an odious and an unclean thing our fragility (*chose odieuse et fétide que notre fragilité*), and she spoke of her sorrows to Master Denis, her confessor, that he might absolve her. Then after she had lifted up her voice, and called very loudly upon the Blessed Virgin Mary, her soul parted from her body upon a Monday, the eleventh day of February 1449 (1450 N.S.) at about six o'clock after noon. Her heart was carried into the said Abbey, and for her body, it was borne away and had very honourable burial at Loche, in the Collegiate Church of Our Lady, where she (Agnes) had made gifts and foundations. And now, God have mercy upon her soul. Amen." It is almost certain that the King stood by the death-bed of Agnes Sorel.

In a burst of remorse and of renewed tenderness he ordered that her funeral should be carried out with extreme pomp and magnificence. At length her body was laid in the choir of the church at Loches, and a monument was raised over her resting-place. Upon a base of black marble the sculptured form of Agnes lay at full length, in all the state of a duchess, for this title Charles gave her after death. Two guardian angels watched by her head. Her book of prayers was in her hand, and her feet rested upon two lambs carved in white marble.

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of Agnes Sorel's influence upon the history of France, and her achievement is beyond all praise. Joan of Arc created, or rather revivified, a national sentiment that was dead or dying. She was the personification of patriotism—she gave her country a king and a cause. She fell into the hands of the enemy, and the golden lilies of France drooped as low as ever. It was then that Agnes turned the reawakened national sentiment to fitting use; it was she who planned and resolved and advised; it was she who conceived policies, and urged actions which freed the country from its yoke, and pushed its enemies to its remotest borders. But it is not possible thus to leave the Lady of Beauté, nor to ignore the very deep significance of her story, however hard it may be to understand or explain that significance.

It is the fashion at the present day to make use of a liberal amount of whitewash in the course of dealing with historical characters, and so there are historians who appear to have nothing but approbation for the life of Agnes Sorel. Confining themselves to the delightful task of appreciation, they will not allow a stigma to rest upon her name. They explain, they excuse, they gloss over, they refer to the customary irregularities of the times, or treat the loves of Charles VII. and Agnes Sorel as a special case, with specially extenuating circumstances.

Nevertheless, to those who cannot believe that morality is entirely a question of time and place, through all the romance, the charm, the fantasy of "old, forgotten, far-off things," that clings about the memory of the sweet Lady of Beauté, there must appear the undisguisable fact of her sin.

Yet God is great, and they do err most irremediably who doubt the power of the Divine Good.

A far Eastern legend¹ tells of a good priest who longed to behold Fugen-Bosatsu (the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra) as a living presence. At length, in a vision, he was led to the house of a courtesan, one Yujo-no-Choja, who lived in the town of Kamzaki.

"When he entered the house of the *yujo*, he found many persons already there assembled—mostly young men of the capital who had been attracted to Kamzaki by the fame of the woman's beauty. They were feasting and drinking, and the *yujo* was playing a small hand-drum, which she used very skilfully, and singing a song.

"The sweetness of her voice filled everybody with surprise and delight. As the priest, who had taken a place apart, listened and wondered, the girl suddenly fixed her eyes upon him; and in the same instant he saw her form change into the form of Fugen-Bosatsu, emitting from the brow a beam of light that seemed to pierce beyond the limits of the universe, and riding a snow-white elephant with six tusks. But the other persons present saw no transformation, only the *yujo* with the hand-drum. . . .

"As the priest departed, she appeared to him outside the gate, and said, 'Friend, do not speak yet to any one of what you have seen this night,' and with these words she vanished away, leaving the air filled with a delicious fragrance."

The monk, by whom the foregoing legend was recorded, comments upon it thus: "The condition of a *yujo* is low and

¹ Translated in "Shadowings," by Lafcadio Hearn.

miserable, since she is condemned to serve the lusts of men. Who therefore could imagine that such a woman might be the incarnation of a Bodhisattva? But we must remember that the Buddhas and the Bodhisattva may appear in this world in countless different forms; choosing for the purpose of their divine compassion even the most humble or contemptible shapes, when such shapes can serve them to lead men into the true path, and to save them from the perils of illusion.”

It may be that the Eastern monk has said the last word about the whole matter.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BOURGEOIS OF PARIS

THERE exist various editions of a singularly interesting document, which has been entitled "The Journal of a Bourgeois of Paris." It is thought that the only complete copy of this work exists somewhere in the library of the Vatican. If indeed that is so, it has never been discovered and brought to light. All known versions are defective and incomplete. The most extended—that included in *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de France et Bourgogne*, collected by Dom Dessalles the Benedictine—contains entries referring to events which occurred as early as the year 1405, and closes in 1449. It thus covers nearly half a century of time, the latter portion of the Hundred Years' War, and the bitter period of civil strife, when France was torn in sunder and fellow-countrymen fought one another to the death, under the opposing standards of the Armagnac and the Burgundian parties.

It records, from the point of view of an inmate of the city of Paris, the assassination upon the bridge of Montereau, the battle of Agincourt, the signing of the Treaty of Troyes, the marriage of King Henry V. of England with the Princess Catherine, a daughter of France; the birth to them of a prince, afterwards to be Henry VI., a most unhappy king; the death and obsequies of King Henry V., those of Charles VI., the mad king of France; the regency of the Duke of Bedford and his relations with the Duke of Burgundy, the piteous battle of Verneuil. It touches upon the siege of Orleans, goes lightly over Joan of Arc's most glorious

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PHILIP THE GOOD, DUC DE BOURGOGNE
FROM THE PAINTING (BOURGOGNE SCHOOL) IN THE LOUVRE

campaigns and the coronation of King Charles VII. at Rheims, deals more fully with the Maid's insufficiently supported attack on Paris, and the day she spent under its walls, with her capture, her captivity, her trial, and her death. It describes the triumphal entry of the child King Henry VI. into Paris, the peace negotiations between France and Burgundy, the waning power of England, the death of Bedford, Paris under Dunois and the great French captains, King Charles VII., and Louis the Dauphin reinstated in the capital after long years of exile. In its last chapter but one it chronicles the visit to Paris of Agnes Sorel, the fair Lady of Beauté, beloved of her King.

The title, "The Journal of a Bourgeois of Paris," is at once misleading and appropriate. Competent critics have decided that the work of two separate authors is discernible. The first wrote from the year 1405, or earlier, till the year 1431. Who he was and what his condition, whether he was churchman or layman, Heaven knows; but some believe he was connected with the University of Paris. At all events he was observant, no ordinary bourgeois, but a scholar, intelligent, a thinker—in his way a philosopher and a moralist. He was heartily of the Burgundian party. In 1419 he writes of the services held for the soul's peace of John, Duke of Burgundy, and of the Sire of Navailles, gentleman of the house of Foix, who met his death beside his lord upon the fatal bridge. He writes sympathetically, and winds up: "God grant us all grace to know Him as we ought, and may He say to us also as He did to His apostles, 'Peace be with you.' Because, through this accursed war, there have been done such evils, that I believe for seventy years before there was not so much evil done as has been done in these twelve years past." He was a lover of nature, a lover of homely detail; he had a tenderness for women and children—sometimes he was almost a poet. He had a

sense of humour, not boisterous, but whimsical, trembling on the verge of cynicism. He possessed the religious sense, but had in addition such an inquiring turn of mind, and so boundless a curiosity, that it is a marvel he did not turn sceptic outright. It seems he had little taste for the airs and graces of literary composition; but he would upon occasion tell a story of the wars with such dramatic directness, such bleak and awful simplicity, as to leave his readers aghast, realizing the element of essential tragedy.

The second writer who had a hand in the Journal began his task about 1431, and apparently ended it in 1449. This work is drier, less sympathetic—it has less of detail, both naive and charming, it records public events with less justice; from it all traces of patriotism, even of party patriotism, have disappeared. Its leading quality is a tone of bitter discontent. It is full of complaints. Every Armagnac is a rascally traitor deserving to die the death, and the Burgundians are little better. Those in power—bishops, provosts, dukes, kings, or regents—are all tyrants and oppressors, who drive peaceful citizens to despair. The writer puts his sentiments into the mouths of a set of poor, miserable peasants, whom he reports as follows: “What shall we do then? Let us put all in the devil’s hands; what does it matter what becomes of us? As well do our worst as our best—better for us to serve Saracens than to serve these Christians. So let us do as vilely as we can, for at the worst they can only kill us or hang us. Because of this false government and the false traitors that are set over us, we abandon our wives and our children, and fly to the woods to live like wild beasts.” He describes himself in one place as “*un des plus parfaits clercs de l’Université de Paris*,” but he and his predecessor with him were not invariably loyal to this institution. The later writer sees the old order passing away and yielding to a state of things

which he certainly considers no better, without a qualm ; he sees the triumph of the “false Armagnacs,” and “him who calls himself the King of France,” and apparently feels no regret ; his sense of honour and his love of his city remain untouched ; he observes and sneers at the great sale of Indulgences among the people, and is very much concerned about the price of turnips.

The critics say that two men wrote the “Journal of the Bourgeois of Paris.” Upon the face of it, it seems probable that it was one man who changed, a young man who grew old, a clever, generous, sensitive man, who, because of the bitter times in which he lived, grew hard and selfish, cynical and without faith in mankind ; who lost loyalty, turned his back upon devotion, knew no more of the doings of the children in Paris streets, or noted the early flowering of the white roses.

The Bourgeois of Paris, then, was no bourgeois, neither was his Journal actually a journal. Internal evidence goes to show that year by year he noted important and striking events, and afterwards, having pondered over them and digested their import, cast his writing into the form now extant. Probably he often altered and expanded the jottings that represented his first impressions. Sometimes, if they appeared to him fresh and vivid, he introduced them verbatim into his finished work, which, properly speaking, is a work of art, a study of life in Paris from a particular point of view, and no diary of a personal or private kind.

Thus its title is misleading, but it is none the less appropriate, for the “Journal of a Bourgeois of Paris” is written deliberately from the bourgeois standpoint. Its ideal of life is bound up with the welfare of Paris and the comfort of its citizens. National affairs are regarded as distinctly subservient to municipal affairs. Rulers and the chiefs of parties are judged by one standard. “He did nothing for

the good citizens of Paris ; he laid new and heavy taxes upon the people ; the processions made in his honour cost the people dear ; at his coming the cost of living rose greatly." These are criticisms made of Armagnacs and Burgundians alike.

The Journal is concerned with civic matters, with the guilds, with the market and market values, with the coinage, with building, with the safety of the streets, and with a hundred aspects of everyday middle-class life. It is curious, intimate, sometimes delightfully convincing, often quaintly commonplace. It reverses the values usually found in the works of historians. Dynasties, kings, queens, battles, and treaties, all are relegated to a place in the background. The theme is the daily existence of the people ; how they worked, how they fought, how they amused themselves, how they prayed, what they eat and what they wore, and the price they paid for their food and their raiment.

In the year 1417 butter cost two *sols parisis* the pound, two eggs, or three at most, were sold for four *deniers parisis*, and a little salt-herring for six *deniers parisis*. The fresh herrings, about the octave of St. Denis, were sold for three or four *blancs*. In August wine cost two *deniers*, and in September and October the same measure rose to four and six *deniers parisis*. Thus it is recorded, to the everlasting edification of housewives. After All Saints', as winter came on, firewood was horribly dear, also all sorts of meat. A quarter of mutton was worth seven or eight *sols parisis*, and a little bit of beef cost two *sols parisis*; one could have got it in October for six *deniers*. A sheep's head cost six *deniers*; butter went up to eight *blancs*, and a little pig cost seventy *sols* or four *francs*.

Corn ripened in the fields about the town, but none cared to reap it because of the Armagnacs, who went about in bands, spoiling and devastating the country, so grain

became scarce and bread outrageously dear. Wheat merchants and bakers shut up shop ; crowds of people waited outside such bakeries as were open, and scrambled for the loaves as they came out of the oven. Onions and apples and cheese were all very dear, and so were peas and beans in 1418, but for some reason or another cabbages were cheap and plentiful. The writer of the *Journal* says feelingly, "*Tout Paris en fut gouverné tout l'hyver.*" One is sensible of an impulse of sympathetic emotion with regard to the Parisians of the fifteenth century.

Alack for the poor people in the cold weather! They could not afford covering for their shivering bodies ; the coarsest stuff rose in price. Cloth that had been sixteen *sols* went up to forty *sols parisii* ; serge was sixteen *sols* ; hose and shoes dearer than ever before ; good linen was twelve *sols* the ell ; fustian, sixteen *sols*. The ladies of Paris were fain to pay fourteen *sols parisii* to have an ell of stuff dyed green, and other colours in proportion. Nevertheless, it is to be believed that they clung to their vanities as ladies will ; for years later, when Brother Richard preached in Paris, and frightened them all by his thunderings of Antichrist, judgment, and the end of the world, it is recorded that women went out into the streets and there burnt their head-dresses, with all the stiffening and buckram, bits of thin copper and of whalebone pertaining thereto, which made them proper and well setting. The young ladies abandoned the horns of their head-dresses and their steeple-crowns, and all manner of pomps. And at this time people who had mandrakes burnt them. Many kept these things in secret places and had great faith in them, and dressed them in silk and in fine linen, for they believed them to be talismans against poverty. In this belief they were instructed by certain old women, sorceresses and heretics. Once rid of Brother Richard, the enthusiast and orator, it

seems that the ladies returned to decking themselves out and adorning their fair bodies, for it was thought necessary to restrict certain of them in this respect. They were forbidden to wear girdles of silver, or necklaces, or feathers to trim their gowns, or miniver.

The ladies of Paris gave thought to their gowns. Nevertheless, often they went in terror of their lives, and in worse terror. Ladies of good lineage and well accompanied went without the city walls, there to view their domains. They were set upon by certain of the enemy, outlaws or men-at-arms, and had, of them, very rough usage; for they were ill-treated and beaten with their company, robbed of their goods, and grievously hurt. In their own Paris streets women found no safety, for the city was infested by robber-bands and villainous footpads, who captured and held them to ransom, or, having spoiled them, tied them in sacks and drowned them in the Seine.

In those hard and dangerous times of continual civil war, children were often born into weakness, misery, and neglect. In the August of 1418 the weather was terribly hot, so that neither women nor children were able to sleep at nights. The heat brought a devastating sickness with it, which attacked pitilessly the boys and girls and the young children of Paris. In 1427, about a fortnight before St. Remy, an evil air blew through the city and spread a disease which men called the *Dando*. Men, women, and many children were laid low. The victim of the *Dando* was taken with violent pain in the limbs, accompanied by shivering fits; for a week or more he could not eat, nor drink, nor sleep, and after this he was tormented by a racking cough. At that time, when one went to hear sermons, one could not hear the preacher's words for the sound of the coughing, says the Bourgeois of Paris; and when friends met by chance in the streets, they said to one another for greeting,

"Have you had the *Dando*?" From time to time there raged smallpox and other epidemics, and what with dirt, poverty, and underfeeding, rich and poor died by thousands, and were hastily buried. Young children starved because milk and other suitable nourishment was not to be procured, and piteous little corpses were found abandoned in the streets.

In the year 1420, about the happy season of Christmas, bread was scarcely to be come by at all. Poor women struggled in the crowds that pressed about the bakers' doors, and could get no morsel of food for their husbands who toiled, or for their starving babies; often they crept back to their wretched homes to die. Then day and night in Paris was heard the sobbing and the pitiful complaining of little children who cried, "I die of hunger!" They searched the dung-heaps of the city for food, ten or sometimes twenty or thirty children together, and there was no heart so hard but hearing them cry at night, "Alack, I die of hunger!" was grieved for them, so says the Bourgeois of Paris. Good souls bought houses, three or four, and furnished them as hospitals; each hospital had forty beds or more, and here poor children had soup and wholesome possets, and warm fires and beds. But there was not enough for all.

Meantime the seasons succeeded each other calmly. The wind blew, the rain fell, and the sun shone upon the just and upon the unjust, and the patient earth brought forth her fruits. Droughts and floods, frost and kindly weather, are all duly chronicled. Once there was a terrible wind, which began to blow upon a Thursday in October. It raged from two in the afternoon until between ten and eleven o'clock at night. It brought down in Paris houses and chimneys without number, and in the forest of Vincennes it blew down more than three hundred and sixty of the

greatest trees that grew there, without counting the little trees ; and it did besides all manner of damage.

In 1432, on St. John the Baptist's Day, there came thunder and lightning, which struck the church tower of Vitry, and the tower falling, broke through the roof of the church and terrified the folk that were at their prayers (for it was at the time of Vespers), and killed five of them outright. On the day of St. Peter and St. Paul in the same year, there fell hailstones as big as billiard balls.

In 1420, after a bitter winter, very early in the year came the sweet miracle of the spring, for in that year there were more violets out in January than there had been in March the year before. At Eastertide came the roses, whose flowering was over by mid-May, and in the first days of this month ripe cherries were sold in Paris streets.

The Bourgeois in his walks abroad gave heed always to the promise of the fields and vineyards. He noted the peach and the pear, the apple and the almond tree in their flowering and their fruit-bearing ; he knew whether turnips and onions were plentiful or no, and when there was a surprising crop, even if it were only of acorns. It is probable that he loved flowers ; for he writes of violets often, both blue and yellow (one would like to know more about a yellow violet), of white roses that flowered early, and is irritated by a plague of moles which one season spoilt all the gardens round.

In the fifteenth century the citizens of Paris lived in terror of wolves, that grew hungry in the winter time, roaming about the outskirts of the city, seizing helpless animals or benighted travellers as their prey. Presently, growing bolder, they ventured into the very streets after dark, and carried off women and children. They swam across the Seine and crept into the graveyards, where they dug up new-made graves all night and devoured the lately

dead. At one time the wolves became so mad with desire for human flesh, that in a single week they strangled and devoured fourteen persons, both great and small, all between Montmartre and the gate of St. Antoine. Some met their horrid end in the vineyards, and some in the marshes. If the wolves came across a flock of sheep or cattle, they attacked the shepherd and let the flock go free. Upon the vigil of St. Martin there was hunted and taken a horrible and terrible wolf, which it was said had done more, and more cruelly, than many others put together. That day he was killed ; he had no tail, and for that he was called *Courtaut*. There was as much talk about him as if he had been an outlaw of the woods or a cruel captain ; and when he lived folk said to one another as they went forth to labour in the fields, "Look out for *Courtaut*." And on this day he was taken through Paris in a cart, dead, with his great jaws open, and all the people went to see, and they made holiday and rejoiced, because *Courtaut* could trouble them no more.

Now while the good citizens of Paris lived as best they might, watching the weather, on account of their crops, eating their dearly bought butter and onions with what appetite they were able, and guarding their lives and limbs from plagues and wolves and outlaws, during this time national events came about. There were treachery and murder in high places ; the dogs of war were let loose in earnest, kings were set up and cast down ; crowns and kingdoms trembled in the balance. John, Duke of Burgundy, he who was assassinated upon the bridge of Montereau, was, in the autumn of 1419, honoured and mourned in Paris. The service was held at the cathedral of Notre Dame. Says the Bourgeois, "It was as dolorous as might be, and there was in the church three thousand pounds of wax which was used for candles and torches, and there

was a very piteous sermon preached by the Rector of the University, who was Master Jehan l'Archer." The guilds of Paris caused Masses to be said, and the churches to be hung in black, and the good Duke's arms were there displayed, and clerks sang the *Subvenite* of the dead.

Philip, Duke of Burgundy, called the Good, succeeded his father. He was a great man in Paris, and the ally of the English. But in the opinion of the Bourgeois, the good citizens did not get much comfort from him. Time and again he came to Paris richly attended, and following him a great train of lords and men-at-arms, who quartered themselves where they would, and devoured the scarce provisions of the town. Then the Duke would go light-heartedly away, leaving Paris to its fate, and the folk there would have no word of him, or of his whereabouts. Upon one of these occasions he was engaged in making preparation for his marriage with Isabel, a princess of Portugal. The Duke made all things ready for the marriage-feast, and waited from day to day for the coming of the lady. But she, poor unfortunate, was tossed about by contrary winds, and at the end of forty long days was cast back upon the shores of her father's kingdom, and was fain to take fresh shipping before she might come to the Duke of Burgundy, her bridegroom. A year after this he was still backward in the affairs of Paris, for he kept none of his promises, and causes were lost through his negligence. But still the citizens loved him, and made excuses for him, saying to one another : "He is occupied with his lady wife, who has borne him a fair son who was christened in January, upon St. Anthony's Day. It is but fitting that in the first year of marriage he should do all to please his spouse."

In April of the year 1435, Duke Philip made a solemn entry into Paris with a very noble company of lords and

ladies, and he brought with him his wife, the Duchess, and the fair boy, that she had had of him in wedlock, and also he had with him three pretty youths who were not born in wedlock, and a pretty maid, and the eldest of these was not more than ten years old. And he had in his company three chariots covered with cloth of gold, and a litter for his son (at this time aged about four), for the others rode very well on horseback ; and for the convenience of himself and his people, he had a good hundred chariots and some twenty carts laden with armour and artillery, with salted fish and flesh, with cheeses and with wines of Burgundy.

The following Wednesday after this the young ladies and the matrons of Paris came to the Duchess, and very piteously craved that she would hasten the peace of the kingdom. She answered them graciously and sweetly : “ My good friends, it is one of the things that I desire, the most in all the world, and, for this, I pray my lord day and night, for I know there is great need ; and I know certainly that my lord desires it also, and will risk life and limb to secure it.”

The streets of Paris knew other great ones. In 1420 was signed the Treaty of Troyes, and King Henry V. of England and France took to wife Catherine, a daughter of France. On the night of the 8th of May, Henry lay at the Abbey of St. Denis, and the next day he rode past the gate of St. Martin outside the city. It is said that he had seven thousand soldiers with him, and a great company, and there was carried before him for a cognizance a helm crowned with a golden crown, and he wore for his device a broidered fox’s tail, and he went by way of the Bridge of Charenton to the King, who was at Troyes. It was upon Trinity Sunday, the second day of June, that the King of England wed the daughter of France. The

chivalry of both countries who were there desired to have a great joust to celebrate the marriage, but when Henry, whom they wished to please, heard of it he said, "I pray my lord the King, whose daughter I have wed, and all his servants, whom I command, that to-morrow morning we may be ready to lay siege to the city of Sens, where are the enemies of my lord the King. There every man shall have his joust and tourney, and occasion to show his prowess, because the fairest prowess in the world is to bring the wicked to justice, so that the poor may live in safety." And on St. Barnabas' Day Henry took Sens, and he and his host went to besiege Montereau-ou-faut-Yonne.

In the following year the Queen of England gave birth to a son, whom they called Henry, and after some time she came to France, and entered Paris in the month of May 1422. Before her litter there were borne two robes of ermine, "and of this the people knew not what to think, if not that she styled herself Queen of France and of England." And for love of the King of England, the lords of that country made a feast upon the day of Pentecost, and acted the Mystery of the Passion of St. George.

In August of the same year King Henry V. fell ill, and died on the last day of the month, and they bore him, mourning, to the Abbey of St. Denis, and from thence to Pontoise, and from thence to Rouen, chanting as they went, and burning candles and torches.

And a bare three months later, Charles, the poor mad King of France, died also, as the Bourgeois records, "upon the vigil of the Eleven Thousand Virgins. And he lay upon his bed in his own room for two or three days, with his face uncovered and a cross at his bed's foot and lights burning, and all who would saw him that they might pray for him." It is said that no great lords of France followed him to Notre Dame, or when they went to lay him in the

earth, and no prince of the blood was there to do him honour, only there were there an English lord, called the Duke of Bedford, brother to the late King Henry of England, and King Charles's own servants, who mourned and bewept their master. And all the poor people of Paris followed after, mourning piteously, their good, simple hearts touched by the fate of one so innocent and so unfortunate. The funeral was magnificent and stately, for all the Duke of Bedford was the sole mourner of note ; and afterwards a herald cried aloud, that all should pray for King Charles's soul, and that God should save and guard Henry of Lancaster, King of France and England. And when the herald cried thus, all the servants of the dead King reversed their maces, their wands, and their swords, for they held their office no more. Then the sword of France was carried before the Duke of Bedford as Regent, and the people murmured, but bore it as needs they must, and that day old men wagged their heads and told tales of King Charles's coronation—how that he was young, gay, and debonair, and very nobly accompanied ; how that his shoes were azure, strewn with the golden lilies ; how that he wore a robe of cloth of gold and vermillion ; how all saw him and admired.

Now Henry was a little puny child, crowned, as they say, with his mother's bracelet. Therefore the Duke of Bedford, the King's uncle, governed in Paris as Regent. He married the sister of the Duke of Burgundy, and together they came to Paris in the Eastertide of 1423, and with them the Earls of Salisbury and Suffolk and a train of English lords, all in gay attire and most richly bejewelled, proud and haughty. In 1424 was fought the battle of Verneuil, in an evil hour for the French party, and Charles the exiled Dauphin. After his victory the Duke of Bedford came riding into Paris, in September, on

the day of the Nativity of Our Lady, and all the streets were decked and cleared, and the citizens who crowded in my lord's path were in scarlet attire. There were processions through the streets, the people singing aloud the *Te Deum laudamus*, and *Noel! Noel!* When the Duke came to the corner of the street of the Lombards, there stood a young man disguised as cleverly as might be, who spoke a welcome. "Before the Chastelet there was played a very fair mystery of the Old Testament and of the New, the which was done by the children of Paris without speech or movement, as if it had been pictures hung against a wall." After looking well and long at the mystery, the Duke went on to Notre Dame, where they received him as if he had been God Himself, the canons and all the ecclesiastics, to the sound of organs and trumpets and the clanging of bells. There could have been no more honour done when the Romans had their triumphs than was done on that day to the Duke and to his lady, who was by his side wheresoever he went.

Late in the year 1431, the Parisians set eyes on their little King Henry VI. The child was at this time about nine years old, and made his entry into Paris by the St. Denis gate, on which was hung, for the occasion, an immense shield, half red and half azure, strewed with the lilies. Over his head they held an azure and gold canopy, before him went the Nine Worthies and the Nine Worthy Dames, and after him a troop of knights and squires, and amongst them went William, called the Shepherd, who showed scars upon his body, after the manner of St. Francis; but he could have had little joy of the show, the Bourgeois says, for he was fast bound with ropes like a thief. Near the King were four bishops—of Paris, of Noyon, a bishop of England, and the Cardinal of Winchester. Besides, there were before the King five-and-twenty heralds

and five-and-twenty trumpeters. The fountains of Paris ran wine and milk upon that day, and the good citizens drank at will. There was a great show of wild men, and a fair mystery which showed the Annunciation of Our Lady and the Flight into Egypt. The stages upon which they represented the mysteries reached from St. Sauveur to the end of the Rue Dernetal, where there was a fountain called the Queen's Fountain. Near the Church of the Innocents there was chasing of a real deer, very pleasant to see, and here those of the Guild of the Drapers who bore the canopy over the King gave place, and the Grocers took it as far as the Chastelet. Here there was a very fair mystery of a young child of the age and likeness of Henry himself, clad in robes of state and crowned with two rich crowns. On his right were shown the great lords of France —Anjou, Berry, Burgundy, and others; on his left the English noblesse, all attired in coats of mail, and further, of clerks and citizens of both realms. And all did as they gave council to the little King, loyally and faithfully. Now the Money-changers took the King's canopy and bore it as far as the Palais-Royal; then the Goldsmiths took it through the Old Jewery, as far as St. Denis de la Chartre; then the Mercers took it to the Hotel d'Anjou; then the Pellterers, and last the Butchers.

Now when the procession came by the Hotel de Saint Paul, the old Queen Isabel was there at a window, with her maidens, to see her grandson ride by. The child looked up and pulled off his cap and saluted her, she bending down from the window. And when he had passed by she turned away weeping.

King Henry was crowned in Notre Dame by the Cardinal of Winchester with great pomp, and afterwards there were held banquets and jousts and councils, until after Christmas, when they took the child away from Paris.

In 1435, on Holy Cross Day, the Duke of Bedford, who had been Regent of France, died at Rouen, and there was buried. Then there passed a man, wise, able, and just, who did what he could for the prosperity of whatever land or town he was in; for he protected the farmers and the merchants, restored buildings that had been ruined in the wars, and built new ones. "And thus," says the Bourgeois, "his nature was altogether contrary to that of the English; for it was his desire to make war upon no man, and the English, in their very nature, continually desire to fight their neighbours without a cause, and so they came to a bad end, for more than six and seventy thousand have met their death in France."

In the days of the Bourgeois, Fortune's wheel was wont to turn quickly and often. In the year 1438, seven years after Joan of Arc was burnt at Rouen, and in fulfilment of her prophecy, the English power left Paris, there to be seen no more, and the good citizens of the town flung their gates open wide for the entry of King Charles VII. (God save him). They were all mad with joy, and lit bonfires in the streets and danced half through the night. They held an azure canopy over the King, who rode armed, with the little Dauphin at his side, who was then ten years old. There was a great procession. The fountains ran milk and wine, mysteries were presented. "In brief," says the Bourgeois, "all was accomplished in the selfsame manner as it had been for the little King Henry when he came to Paris and was crowned."

Besides these, the city saw other distinguished visitors. In 1441 the poet Duke of Orleans, whom the English had held captive for five-and-twenty long years, was welcomed, together with his Duchess, within its hospitable gates. A year or two later there came to Paris a young priest, a Cordelier from Troyes in Champagne—"a small man with

a very sweet face, and he was called Jehan Crete. His age was twenty-one years or thereabouts, and he was held to be one of the best preachers that had been in Paris for the space of a hundred years . . . and truly it seemed that he had by heart the Old Testament and the New, and all the Golden Legend, and that he knew the ancient books of all the nations . . . and whenever he preached the church was full of people."

The Bourgeois has here indicated a medieval type of considerable charm.

He next describes a person who is a very palpable fraud, but who managed nevertheless to impose upon the members of the University of Paris, and to become a more than seven days' wonder in that city. This person was a youth who was master of the seven liberal arts, could play upon all musical instruments, sing and chant better than any other, paint and illuminate better than any that had the art to do so in Paris or elsewhere. In arts of war there was never a one so expert, and none could compete with him in the wielding of a two-handed sword. This wonderful young man was master of arts, master of medicine, doctor of laws, doctor of theology ; he spoke Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldaic, Arabic, and other tongues. He was a knight of chivalry ; and the Bourgeois remarks that even should a man live a hundred years and spend none of it in eating, drinking, or sleeping, it is likely that he would never acquire such a knowledge of the sciences as that possessed by this prodigy, who in sapience was the " Non-pareil of the World." Indeed he was something beyond human nature. The Parisians were afraid of him. Legends of Beelzebub, Gog and Magog, came to them and froze their marrows. A horrible suspicion concerning Antichrist himself caused them ardently to apply themselves to their devotions. The Bourgeois records his view of the situation

in a manner both naive and picturesque. Catastrophe, however, seems happily to have been averted. The furore caused by this fifteenth-century Admirable Crichton died away, and he himself, accomplishing nothing, passes into the limbo of medieval curiosities.

One April, it is recorded, "A lady came to Paris, the which was said to be beloved of the King of France, without loyalty and honour, and without respect to the good Queen his Spouse. And the lady held great state, like a duchess or a countess, and she called herself, and was called, 'the fair Agnes.' She was proud, and because the people of Paris did her no honour, in May she departed, and," says the Bourgeois, "went back to her sin as before—alack, it was great pity."

The streets of Paris knew her no more—those narrow, ill-kept thoroughfares, with their gutters and their over-hanging houses, their mysterious doorways and blind alleys. In the days of the Bourgeois there passed through those streets gaily habited lords attended by their pages; delicate ladies picked their way to church through the mire; honest citizens in furred robes went about their business, jostled by starving beggars, lepers, and pick-pockets; children disported themselves upon the rubbish-heaps, treasure-seeking, not in sport, but in grim earnest; processions passed along to the cheering and shouting delight of the crowd, and peaceable people shut themselves into their dwellings behind closed and barred doors, whilst swords were drawn and blood spilt in a brawling affray of men-at-arms, or in gentlemen's hot quarrels. Sometimes there passed companies of musicians, who played and sang as they went; sometimes a robber-band, men bound and sullen on their way to justice. Sometimes a funeral went by with candles burning, and the effigy of the newly dead borne aloft, painted in life-like colours,

and dressed in robes of silk and velvet, or, in times of plague and sickness, those charged with the gloomy office went from door to door to take corpses to their hasty burial. At street-corners men gambled with dice, or idled away their time, playing games of hazard by the hour ; others, with women and children, crowded round pedlars and their packs, listened to the tales of holy palmers who stood resting, with staves in their hands and cockle-shells upon their hats, were shown relics of great virtue and power, for a consideration, and spent their scanty pence on Pardons and Indulgences, tendered by Mendicant Friars.

Sometimes the people flocked without the gates to have their fortunes told, at least they did so upon one occasion, and the Bourgeois tells of it. A tribe of a hundred or a hundred and twenty persons from Lower Egypt, he says, was condemned by the Pope to wander over Europe as a penance. In the year 1427 they came to Paris, riding, but in very wretched guise. Not men only, but also women and children. They were lodged at St. Denis, without the city, and there crowds of people came, out of sheer curiosity, to gaze at them. It is recorded that the children of the tribe were very clever boys and girls, and that nearly all of them had their ears pierced, and hung with silver earrings, the which was counted a grace in their own country. The men were very dark, with curly hair, and the women were the darkest and the ugliest ever seen ; their hair was black, and like a horse's tail—they were all coarsely and poorly dressed. Indeed they were the most wretched-looking creatures that had been seen in France within the memory of man. Nevertheless they had sorcerers in their company, who looked in the hands of the people, and told them of the future. Also many citizens returned to their homes with empty purses. Not so the Bourgeois, who went himself, so it seems, to inter-

view the strangers, but thought little of their magic, and left them none of his money. Now, news of these wanderers reached the Bishop of Paris, who went forth, taking with him a Jacobin, called Le Petit, which last made a very fine sermon, wherein he excommunicated all those that did the fortune-telling (for it is a work of the Evil One), and also all those who had shown their hands and believed. And the people of Lower Egypt were ordered to depart, and so they did, and took road for Pontoise.

Some time after this, there came to Paris a woman called Margot. She was young enough, about twenty-eight or thirty, and was of the country of Hainault, and she was so marvellous a tennis-player that she could beat almost any man. She showed her prowess in the street of Grenier Saint Ladre, where they played this game in Paris, and none could stand against her.

In the year 1430 there is recorded the observance of a curious custom. Certain inhabitants of the city, driven to despair by the miseries of war, poverty, and starvation, banded themselves together for the purposes of lawless living, and devoted themselves to robbery, rapine, and murder. Ninety-eight of them were at length captured by the authorities, twelve were hanged upon the gallows in Paris, and more were taken to the market-place, where ten parted with their heads, with precious little ado. Now the eleventh of these poor scoundrels was a very fair and fine young man, some twenty-four years old. They made him ready for death, stripping him and binding his eyes. Then a girl, who was born in the quarter of the markets, came boldly and asked for his life. He was immediately delivered over to her on condition that she should marry him, which she very soon did ; but of how they fared afterwards nothing is recorded.

Beside this romantic event may be placed another

episode or two, set down duly in the Journal, and evidently appealing to that very extraordinary thing, medieval fancy. A woman gave birth to a prodigy with two heads and four arms. This, the Bourgeois assures his readers, is a fact, for he himself saw and handled the child. It lived three days, was satisfactorily baptized, and died an hour afterwards.

All Paris seems to have been interested in the funeral arrangements of the nephew of the Lord of Paleton, an unfortunate young man, who fell in a skirmish by the St. Denis gate. His remains were placed in a cauldron at the cemetery of St. Nicolas, and boiled until the flesh became separated from the bones. Then the flesh and the water from the cauldron were buried in a great and deep grave, dug in the aforesaid cemetery, whilst the bones were placed in a coffer to be carried to England. These, and further details, the Bourgeois records with grave interest.

In another place he sets down an incident no less typical of the time. "On the eleventh day of October, a Thursday, the recluse called Jehanne-la-Voirière was installed by Master Denys des Moulins, who was then Bishop of Paris, in a new little house within the cemetery of the Innocents, and there was preached a very fine sermon before her, and before a very great crowd of people who had come to see."

So much for the life of old Paris. But before taking final leave of the Bourgeois it will be of interest to take his word as to what the citizens thought of Joan the Maid. He speaks of her first thus, laconically: "In these days there was a Maid (so it was said) beside the river Loire, who gave herself out to be a prophetess and said, 'truly such and such things shall come to pass.' And she was against the Regent of France and those with him. . . . Those of her party say that when she was a child and

kept sheep in the field, the lambs and the birds of the air came at her call and eat from her lap. *In veritate apocriphum est.*"

Of the assault upon Paris (which is spoken of elsewhere) he says : " The Armagnacs had with them a creature in the form of a woman, but what it was God knows." Of the Maid's trial he treats in a manner worthy of a member of the University of Paris and of the Burgundian party. But of her end he speaks pitifully enough, and passes no final judgment: " There were some there (at Rouen) and elsewhere that said she died a martyr for her rightful lord, others said no, and that they had done grievously wrong who had received her. Thus spoke the people ; but did she well or ill, that day she was burned."

CHAPTER IX

JOAN IN COURT AND CAMP

"**I**F a boy could ever be found so beautiful and so bashful, I should have taken you for a boy about fifteen years old. Really, and without flattery, I think you are very lovely." These words, put by Landor into the mouth of Agnes Sorel, form a tribute to Joan the Maid that is full of grace and charm. The description is simplicity itself. It suggests nothing mystical or statu-esque, nothing of the prophetess or goddess or avenging Amazon, nothing even of the peasant's strength and calm, and the dignity of labour. Joan, the divinely inspired, the patriot, the leader of armies, appeared to the beholder as a charming boy, if indeed a boy could ever be found so beautiful and so bashful. She is represented as a winning figure, graceful and gallant, instinct with chivalry and romance. There is indicated a complete aspect of her many-sided personality. The mainspring of her fascination is touched. The character of her relations with the members of Charles VII.'s Court, and with the nobles, knights, and soldiers, her companions in arms, is suggested. Here is Joan, fresh and boyish, bravest of the brave, full of enthusiasm, energy, and magnificent health, the flower of chivalry, the darling of Dunois and Alençon, the angel of the people, the wonder of the army, the well-beloved of her confessor, her esquire, and those that knew her best.

It is a tenderer picture than that conceived by Shakespeare, although, it seems, that even for English eyes the

Maid possessed beauty. She speaks thus to the Dauphin Charles :—

“ Lo, whilst I waited on my tender lambs,
And to sun’s parching heat displayed my cheeks,
God’s mother deignèd to appear to me
And, in a vision full of majesty,
Willed me to leave my base vocation
And free my country from calamity :
Her aid she promised, and assured success :
In complete glory she revealed herself,
And, whereas I was black and swart before,
With those clear rays which she infused on me
That beauty am I bless’d with which you see.”

In what exactly that beauty consisted can never now be known. There is no trustworthy portrait of the Maid done from life, though pictures inspired by memory (rarely) and fantasy abound. There remains no careful and complete account of her features. Poets preferred to praise her victories rather than her face, and her friends bore witness to her words and acts more than to her looks. Yet there is something to be gleaned. Her hair was dark brown or nearly black, and she wore it cut *en rond*, that is to say, in soldier fashion, about on a level with the ears. The fact seems to have been very striking, for it is mentioned again and again. “ She was fine looking and well formed.” Beyond all doubt she was physically very strong, and capable of great endurance. Her countenance was expressive ; often it was confident and gay ; she smiled frequently, but upon occasion she could draw her brows together and compress her lips, for she could hardly endure deception, and was impatient of idleness and delays. The colour of her eyes and their form is not known, but it is recorded that she lifted them to heaven when there came to them a wrapt look of inspiration. For the rest it seems that she was pale rather than red, for all she was such a country-bred maid, and not very tall, though powerfully built, and excellently well-knit and proportioned.

The young knights of Laval who came to join the royal army, wrote to their mother telling her of the Maid, in the heyday of her fame and glory.

"Upon Monday," says Guy de Laval, "I went with the King to Selles in Berry, which is at four leagues from St. Aignan, and the King caused to come to him the Maid, who was before Selles . . . and the said Maid made good cheer for my brother and for me ; she was in complete armour, except her head, and she held a lance in her hand. . . . I went to her lodging to see her, and she had wine brought, and told me that I should drink with her in Paris soon enough. And altogether it seemed a divine thing to see her and to hear her. And she left Selles upon this Monday at the time of Vespers, to go to Romorantin. . . . And I beheld her mount her horse. She was in white armour, all except her head, and a little axe in her hand. She was to ride a great black courser, which, when he was led forth, was very restive, and would not suffer that she should mount. Then she said : 'Lead him to the cross near by, which is before the church.' And there she mounted him, for he stood as still as if he had been bound. Then she turned to the church door that was near by and said in her woman's voice (*assez voix de femme*), ' You priests and men of the Church make processions and prayers to God.' After this she turned once more into her road, crying, ' Forward ! forward ! ' A gracious page carried her standard unfurled, and she had her little axe in her hand."

Before this, indeed whilst she was still at Chinon, Joan met the young Duke d'Alençon, who had only lately been released from a long captivity following the battle of Verneuil, where he had been taken prisoner by the English. They became companions in arms and dear friends, with a romantic friendship typical of the chivalrous age that was swiftly passing away. Joan called him her "pretty Duke." He first heard of the Maid whilst hunting quails in the

marshes near St. Florent, and went to Chinon, where he found her talking with the King. When the Duke entered their presence :

“ Who is this ? ” asked the Maid.

“ It is the Duke d’Alençon,” replied Charles.

Then the Maid said : “ You are welcome. The more that come together of the royal blood of France, the better it will be.”

“ The next day,” the Duke d’Alençon records, “ she went to the King’s Mass.” And it seems that the Maid, the Duke, and the King dined together. After dinner they walked out into the fields, where Joan rode before the King and coursed with a lance. The Duke was so charmed by her brave horsemanship and the way in which she managed her lance, that he made her a present of a horse.

The Duchess d’Alençon was very loath that her lord should set forth once again to the wars, for she called to mind Verneuil and the weary years of captivity. But the Maid said :

“ Madam, have no fear, for he shall indeed return to you, as well as he is now, or even better.”

At this time the Duke was young, ardent, and generous. He had suffered much at English hands ; he was bound by close ties to the captive Duke of Orleans, whose daughter he had married. He gave good credence from the first to the Maid and her mission ; he was brave and eager to fight ; small marvel that Joan loved him.

After her examination by the learned doctors at Poitiers, the Maid was brought to Tours, where she sojourned for a short time in the house of Jean de Puy, Lord of La Roche St. Quentin, and of Eleanore, his wife, who had been maid of honour to the Queen of France. The famed armourers of this loyal town forged a suit of mail for the Maid. Her armour was white, and as simple as might be. It consisted of a helmet, with a movable visor ; a cuirass in four pieces, together with pieces for the shoulders, arms,

elbows, legs, and knees, a gorget and gauntlets. The armour of those times was not clumsy, but delicately made to define the figure accurately, but it was of necessity very heavy in weight. Nevertheless, during her campaigns, the Maid was fain to wear it night and day. She once wore it for six days and nights together, and never complained of the inevitably ensuing stiffness and pain. She rode also upon a war-horse, that the King gave her out of the royal stables, armed completely, except her head. When she was not fighting she wore a little cap, and an esquire bore her *salade*. She loved good horses, and gay colours too, and rich stuffs, and would cover her steel corselet with a tunic or cloak of scarlet velvet or cloth of gold. It was the fashion to wear these cloaks slashed up into deep scallops at the lower edge, so that they might flutter the more bravely in the breeze.

Charles the Dauphin chose officers for a special following for the Maid, to form her *household*. Amongst them were her brothers Jean and Pierre, Jean de Metz and Bertrand de Poulengy, who had brought her from Vaucouleurs to Chinon. Jean d'Aulon was her faithful steward, or equerry. Raimond, and Louis de Contes were her pages; Brother Jean Pasquerel, an Augustine friar, was her confessor. Joan herself caused a standard to be made of white linen edged with fringes of silk, and embroidered with lilies. The Lord of Heaven was painted upon the standard, holding the world in His hand and having an angel on either side, with the motto *Jhesus Maria*. Upon the reverse of the standard there was an Annunciation, Our Lady, and the Angel with the lily. This standard Joan bore in her hand through the thick of the battles wherein she fought, for she would not carry her sword, lest she should strike and slay. By the standard she set great store. She had a little pennon also, with a white dove on a blue ground and this device : “*De par le Roy du ciel.*”

From Tours the Maid rode on to Blois, to find the army that was to go with her to Orleans. The army was not large, probably there were not four thousand men, but de Rais was there and the Marechal Boussac ; de Cullen, Admiral of France, the great La Hire, and Poton de Xaintrailles, and they had money and good supplies for the beleaguered citizens of Orleans.

When Joan saw that all things were ready, she dictated this letter¹ to the King of England, to the Regent, and to Scales, Suffolk, and Talbot, who led the English army before Orleans. To the army she sent the letter by one of her heralds :—

“ **† JHESUS MARIA †**

“ King of England, and you, Duke of Bedford, who call yourself Regent of the kingdom of France, William de la Pole, Count of Suffolk, John Lord Talbot, and you, Thomas Lord Scales, who call yourselves the lieutenants of the said Bedford, do justice to the King of Heaven and to the Royal Blood (of France) : give over to the Maid, sent by God, the King of Heaven, the keys of all the good towns which you have taken and violated in France. She is come from God, the King of Heaven, to reclaim the Royal Blood. She will make peace if you will do justice. . . . And you archers, fair men-at-arms, and others that are before the good town of Orleans, depart, by God’s will, to your own country, and if you will not, expect news of the Maid, who will go to see you presently to your undoing. King of England, if you will not hear me, I am leader in the war, and everywhere I find your people in France, I will force them out, willy-nilly, and if they will not obey me, I will have them all slain ; if they obey, I will be merciful. I am come by the Will of God, the King of Heaven, body for body,

¹ The letter is dated 22 March. It was probably written at Poitiers, but not sent till later ; perhaps not until Joan was at Blois.

to clear you out of France. . . . If you will not believe these news from God and the Maid, wherever we find you we shall strike, and will make so great a *hayhaye* that the like of it has not been seen in France these thousand years past, if you will not hear reason. And you may surely believe that the King of Heaven will give more strength to the Maid and to her good men-at-arms than to you, and it will be seen which has the better right, the God of Heaven or you, Duke of Bedford. The Maid begs and requires that you will not destroy yourself. If you will do right, you may yet come with her in her company where the French will do the fairest deed that was ever done for Christendom. Make your answer to the City of Orleans if you would have peace, and if not, you will know of it briefly, to your great sorrow.—Written on Tuesday in Holy Week.

“From the MAID.”

This letter is one of several examples of the Maid's literary style. It is easy to believe that it was characteristic. The language is simple, forcible, full of vitality. The tone is confident, direct, and audacious. This document; and two more of a like nature, which Joan sent to the English before Orleans, were received with the utmost derision. They kept the Maid's heralds, and sent her no answer back.

Then began the Maid's holy war. She had a great company of priests to march with her army. She gave them a banner of their own, with a presentment of Our Saviour upon the cross. They gathered about it daily to pray and to chant the hymns of Our Lady, the Maid with them. To these services she called the soldiers of her army, and she would have them confessed before they came. She would brook no cursing and swearing or evil language from great or from small. By this rule of hers, it is said that the great La Hire was vastly put about, for he was proud of his

choice store of oaths, which he loved to use freely. He was fain to bow to her decree and to swear most tamely, "by his baton," as she bade him. It is recorded that the Maid once prevailed upon La Hire to pray, who made his unwonted petition to the Deity as follows : " Fair Sir God, I pray Thee to do unto me this day what I would do to Thee, were I God and Thou La Hire ! "

On the 28th of April the Maid rode forth from Blois with the army, the priests going before with their standards and chanting the *Veni Creator*. And that night she slept in camp, for the first time, fully armed.

On the 29th of April, having come to Orleans by the quickest and most perilous way, whilst the bulk of her soldiers were obliged to take another route, she made her entry into the city by torchlight. Already the people were for her, heart and soul. They were war-worn and sick with the miseries of the siege, but, says an eye-witness of the scene, " At once they felt themselves comforted and relieved by the Divine virtue which it had been told them was in this simple Maid, whom they regarded very affectionately, both men, women, and little children." Men, women, and little children, they pressed into the street and crowded upon the path of the Maid to welcome her.

The Maid, all in white armour, rode by Dunois' side on a great and splendid horse. When the people beheld her they rejoiced as if God Himself had come to them, and shouted and wept for joy. They strove to come near her, to touch her, or her garment or her horse, and in the press a torch-bearer was jostled so that his torch set alight her standard, but she turned quickly and crushed out the flame. Thus riding through the narrow streets, upon the rough and stony way, the Maid and Dunois, and the concourse that rode with them, came to the church of St. Croix, where they gave great thanksgiving to God. And after that the Maid was brought to her lodging hard by the Regnart

Gate, at the house of Jacques Boucher, Treasurer of the Duke of Orleans.

Jacques Boucher was a notable citizen of Orleans, and his wife was the daughter of a great *bourgeois* house. He had been in the town throughout the siege, and had furnished considerable money for arms, food, and ammunition. Joan, her two brothers and her page, were made welcome to his house, which was one of the finest in Orleans. The Maid's good hostess greeted her and relieved her of her armour. The little girl of the house, who was nine years old, and was called Charlotte, after the captive Duke Charles, shared Joan's bed, and bore her company at night. Such was the custom of the times.

Now the actual situation of affairs at Orleans was as follows : The English army had more or less invested the city, and had been for months past patiently carrying on a siege, which was, as they considered, in the nature of events, drawing to a satisfactory close. They were ensconced in forts or *boulevards*, situated at intervals within a certain radius of the city. These units of force suffered somewhat from their isolation ; but from this weakness the English had so far felt little inconvenience. Their army had been slightly, but only slightly, troubled by internal disaffection. It was, upon the whole, united and in fair condition. It had, until this time, been remarkable for the courage and high confidence, many times justified, of its soldiers. It had all the prestige of a conquering army.

The defenders of Orleans, on the other hand, had all but lost heart. They had hardly any hope of dislodging their enemies. They were in a very poor way as to ammunition and provisions. The last attempt that had been made for their relief had ended in a miserable fiasco.

At this juncture a girl in armour, with a handful of soldiers, successfully braves the English lines, and rides into Orleans under cover of night, with the news that a

party of four thousand men will attempt to follow her in a few days' time.

As far as facts are concerned, this was the sole modification of the situation. Morally speaking, the change was fundamental. The party whose attitude was the least altered by the advent of the Maid was that of the military leaders of Orleans—Dunois, de Gaucourt, Ambroise, de Loré, Florent d'Illiers, and the like. They were excessively depressed. Knowing themselves to be in a bad case, which could scarcely be made worse, they were willing to try the Maid. They had so much faith. But they were not willing to give her a military command, and the direction of affairs. They did not welcome her to their councils of war, a slight which Joan deeply and properly resented. They said to her, in fact : "Joan, save Orleans"; and promptly tied her hands. Their attitude, though it led them to adopt deplorable methods of deception, was natural considering the circumstances. The Maid transcended it, and led them to victory in spite of themselves.

As for the men-at-arms, the soldier citizens, and the people of Orleans, they believed in the Maid and in her promises. She inspired them with something of her own inspiration. Their despair was turned to confidence, their nervous dread of the English *Godons* and of their awful *Hurrah*, evaporated completely. No longer was there need to urge them to the fray; they were eager to fight, and assured of victory; a great wave of feeling passed over them, a great desire took possession of them. In the mysterious manner that these things come about, a popular movement was started, was in full swing.

The change that came over the mood of the English army was strange and complete. In vain did the leaders receive the Maid's summons with scorn, in vain did they insult her, and deal unknightly with her heralds. They might speak as haughtily, as contemptuously, as con-

fidently as they chose. It was to no purpose. A black suspicion crept about among their company, that froze into a certainty. The Armagnacs had the devil upon their side. They had with them a limb of the foul fiend, whom they would bring into battle. Englishmen would fight Frenchmen three to one and welcome, but they would not face Beelzebub. The echo of this superstitious terror is to be found in a letter which the Duke of Bedford wrote to King Henry VI. some little time later. "All prospered for your cause until the time of the siege of Orleans, undertaken God knows by what advice. Since that time, and after the misfortune come to my cousin of Salisbury, your people, assembled before Orleans in great numbers, have received a heavy blow which seems to have fallen from the skies. This check has come to them, in my opinion, from the foolish thoughts and unreasonable fears which have been brought upon them by a disciple or a limb of the enemy, called the Maid, who has used false enchantments and sorcery."

On the 4th of May, the four thousand men forming Joan's army of relief arrived. The Maid and a company from the city went out to meet them, and brought them in, in great triumph, all in the broad light of day, before dinner. The English never made a sign.

In the afternoon of the same day the Maid, being wearied out with much riding, lay down upon a couch and slept. D'Aulon, her squire, who was not far off, was himself very tired and fell asleep. Meanwhile, the noble military leaders, burning with a new and unquenchable valour, availed themselves of their newly arrived reinforcements, privately to organize a sortie. They directed their attack upon the strong English fortress of St. Loup. But Talbot and his men fell upon them with such vigour that they were fain to repent at leisure what they in haste had undertaken.

Whilst they were in this sorry plight the Maid leapt up suddenly from her couch and waked her esquire in a hurry, for her Counsel had told her that somewhere there was fighting toward, and that her side was in danger. He rose and armed her as quickly as he might, the ladies of the house helping. Whilst they were thus employed there was heard a great noise and uproar in the streets without, people calling that the French were suffering greatly at English hands. As soon as she was armed, the Maid ran down the stairs. She met her page Louis de Contes in the way, and cried : " Ah, bloodthirsty boy, you did not tell me that French blood was being shed ! " (*Ha, sanglant garçon, vous ne me dyriez pas que le sang de France feust repandu*). " Bring my horse." She mounted forthwith, and her page handed her her banner out through the window. Then she set spurs to her horse and galloped away to the Burgundy Gate. She went at such speed that sparks flew out from under her horse's hoofs.

As she reached the gate d'Aulon her esquire came up with her, and they saw a wounded man carried into the city. The Maid stayed to ask who he was, and was told a Frenchman. Then she said she had never seen French blood shed without feeling her hair stand on end. Nevertheless, she rode on gallantly to her first combat, and when she came to the fortress of St. Loup and beheld her friends all discouraged, she cheered them on with a great shout, and flung herself into the forefront of the fray. And so they made fresh onslaught against the English and overcame them, and their fort was taken, and all in it were killed or captured.

About the hour of Vespers the Maid rode back into Orleans, and those of the army rested and refreshed themselves. The Maid had wine poured into a cup, and as much water with it, and she took five or six pieces of bread dipped in the wine and water and was satisfied, eating no more that day.

The 5th of May, being the Feast of the Ascension, the Maid's army kept Holy Day in Orleans; there was no sortie or any warlike exploit done. Upon the 6th the French, with Joan in their van, drove the English from their fort of the Augustins, and so prepared the way for the attack upon the Tourelles, the very stronghold of the English. This took place upon the 7th of May, and was the greatest episode of the relief. The struggle lasted throughout the long summer day, and there fought Dunois and La Hire, de Rais, Graville, Poton de Xaintrailles, Thibaut d'Armagnac, Louis de Culan, and de Gaucourt, of the chivalry of France, and the Maid with them. About noon the Maid was wounded by an English arrow. Nevertheless she returned to the fight, and at sunset, after a fierce and terrible assault, the fort was taken. Many and many an Englishman there breathed his last. Some perished by the sword, and some being upon the wooden bridge which crossed the river Loire, the people of Orleans set fire to it, so that at length it fell crashing into the river, and many were burnt or drowned. "*Glacidas, surrender, surrender!*" cried the Maid to Sir William Gladsdale, an English captain, "*for I have great pity for your soul.*" But he would not hear her, but went down with the bridge, and so died.

And the Maid wept bitterly for the deaths that day, and the multitude of souls which were departed unshriven.

She entered the town in great triumph. All that night the English prepared hastily to depart. Upon Sunday morning, the 8th of May, they came forth from their *bastilles* and set themselves in battle array, under Talbot, their chief. The French also disposed themselves in order without the city walls. But no signal of combat was given. The Maid, who wore a light coat of mail, not being able to bear her armour, ordered that an altar should be raised in the field, and Mass said. And this was done. Then :

"Look," she said ; "have the English their faces turned to us or their backs ? "

She was told that they had turned away towards Meung.

"In God's name," she said, "let them go if they will ; it is not my Lord's command that we should fight them to-day. You will have them another time." And the English retreated in good order. So Orleans was relieved indeed.

Then was the fame of Joan and of her exploits spread abroad throughout France, and carried by messenger and by letter to Germany, to Milan, to Burgundy, to England, and to Rome. Then were strange and ancient prophecies of Bede and Merlin and of the "Princess of Hungary" unearthed, and duly passed from mouth to mouth. Then appeared, and grew legends concerning her ; then was born a belief in her and in her powers, that amounted to a cult. She was consulted upon all sorts of questions, about debased coinage, about the just distribution of property, about all sorts of religious difficulties. Lords and nobles flocked to her standard, all impatient that she should lead them to battle and to victory. Gentlemen sold their lands that they might fit themselves out to go and fight with her. If they were too needy to go as captains, they offered themselves as simple archers or men-at-arms. The knights that followed her regarded her with so romantic and chivalrous a worship, that they had made for themselves pennons like hers, which they flew upon their lances. Poor women brought her objects that she might touch them and make them holy, but she laughed and bade them do it themselves, for her touch had no divine virtue.

The churchmen Gerson and Gelu wrote treatises in favour of the Maid. The poet Alain Chartier spoke of her. Later, Christine de Pisan, a venerable poetess who had retired into seclusion within the sheltering walls of a convent, burst into a swan-song in Joan's praise :—

"Ah, Jehanne de bonne heure née,
 Benoit soit ciel qui te crea !
 Pucelle de Dieu ordonnée,
 En qui le Saint Esprit rea
 Si grant grace, et qui ot et a
 Toute largesse de haute don,
 Oucq requeste ne te vea
 Qui te rendra assez guerdon."

Perceval, Lord of Boulainvilliers, writes to the Duke of Milan to give an account of the marvellous Maid, and says near the end of his letter :—

"The Maid is of a pleasing appearance. She can support fatigue as well as a man, she speaks little, and shows an admirable prudence. She has a voice very womanly and full of charm. She eats little, and drinks wine moderately. She loves luxury of horses and armour, and nobles and armed men. She loves not much talk, and no superfluous word makes any impression upon her. Her capacity to labour is incredible, and her endurance under arms is such that she remains six days on end completely armed day and night. . . . Prince, to put an end to my words, I add that more marvels have come about than I can write. She has just left for Rheims in Champagne, where the King proposes to go for his anointing and coronation."

There was an interval between the relief of Orleans and the writing of the above letter. This interval was occupied by the Maid's most brilliant and glorious campaign. It saw her most daring exploits and feats of arms, and her military skill in action.

On the 10th of May 1429, the deliverer of Orleans met her well-beloved King. Charles, who could act gracefully enough upon occasion, rode out to meet her. The Maid came riding, her standard in her hand, her head uncovered. She reined in and bent reverently to her saddle-bow. But the King pulled off his own cap and raised her kindly.

"And it seemed to many," says the chronicler, "that he would have liked to have kissed her, for the joy that he had." The two rode to Loches together, and indeed the King was so well content that he (and his counsellors with him) were mightily inclined to let well alone. But the Maid and her companions would have none of it. She chafed openly at the lengthy deliberations of the Court party, and soon took bold action. She penetrated to Charles's private chamber, and knocking upon the door, entered without ceremony. She threw herself before the King, embracing his knees, and said, with tears :

"Noble Dauphin, do not hold so many and so long councils ; follow me, and come to Rheims for your rightful crown."

For this, the King and his advisers were unable to screw their courage up to the sticking-point. They must have time, and yet more time for consideration. However, the Maid was there, waiting and impatient, supplies were there, and enthusiastic soldiers. The Duke d'Alençon was made Lieutenant-General of the Army, and received the order to go, in company with the Maid, and to clear the banks of the Loire and the neighbourhood of Orleans of the English power.

The King, having presented Joan with a coat of arms (which her brothers used, she herself, never)—two golden lilies on a shield, azure, having between them a sword supporting a crown—retired to his residence of Chinon, apparently more or less exhausted with his unwonted exertions.

On the 4th of June, the Maid and the Duke d'Alençon laid siege to the town of Jargeau, which fell under the attack of the French army. Suffolk, who held it, was taken prisoner, one of his brothers, William Pole, with him, whilst another brother was killed. During the fight, the Maid saved the life of her "pretty Duke" d'Alençon

by her timely warning, when he stood in a position of great danger within range of one of the enemy's guns.

After Jargeau the Maid and her host went on to take Meung and Beaugency. On June 18th they came upon Talbot and Fastolf near Patay, and vanquished them in the open field. There fought, of the French chivalry — the Duke d'Alençon, the Count of Vendôme, the Constable Richemont, the Marshal Sainte Sevère, Louis de Culan, Admiral of France, Poton de Xaintrailles, La Hire, the Lords of Albret, of Laval, of Chauvigny, and of Loré.

Before the battle, “Joan, shall we fight?” asked Alençon.

“Have you good spurs?” said the Maid.

“Why, then, must we flee?”

“No! But the English will, and you must have spurs to follow.”

At Patay, the mighty Englishman, Talbot, was taken a prisoner, and brought before Alençon, who asked him curiously :

“You little expected this in the morning?”

But Talbot answered, “It is the fortune of war.”

Those who fought with the Maid, during this victorious week upon the banks of the Loire, bear witness to her courage and coolness in the field, to her skill as a soldier and to her capacity for organizing battle. She excelled in her management of the lance, in horsemanship, in placing the troops under her command, and in the disposing of artillery. Her presence was inspiring, her personality was compelling. She possessed that gift, inestimable to the leader, the power of inspiriting her men. “Come, they are yours!” she cried. Or, “Enter, you have conquered.” And the battle was won, or the town captured. In one week she relieved Orleans, which had languished beleaguered for months; in one week she cleared the English away from all the neighbourhood of the Loire, where they had had a footing for years.

Upon the 19th of June, Joan went from Patay to Orleans, where the loyal and grateful people welcomed her with every sign of joy. Both she and they expected the Dauphin's arrival in the city, and the streets were made ready, hung with rich stuffs and flying banners. Howbeit, he came not, and the Maid was fain to seek him at Sully-sur-Loire. Charles greeted her with affection, said he was sorry for all the fatigues she had gone through, and gently recommended a little repose.

The Maid received these expressions of sympathy with a piteous face. She burst into a flood of disappointed tears, and besought the King not to waste a moment, but to come with her to Rheims for his coronation. He wasted many moments, when every moment was superlatively precious. Rheims, and then Paris, was the ideal programme. Rheims, and then Paris, it might have been, and the death-blow dealt to the English dominion in France. Through the Maid's noble persistence, Rheims, and then Paris, it actually was, but with so much intrigue, ill-will, and time frittered away, that the golden opportunity was lost, the desired consummation not to be obtained. Charles lingered, the Duke of Bedford laboured the while. He laboured to build up the English prestige, which had been so woefully diminished ; he laboured to propitiate the Duke of Burgundy, who had grown exacting and difficult. He sent to England demanding instant and extensive reinforcements. He took a leaf out of the Maid's book, and sent for the little King Henry VI. to come and be crowned in France. He strengthened the fortifications of Paris. He used his time admirably. Whatever else he may have been, he was a true lover of England, and for this time he saved her from utter defeat in the kingdom of France.

At the end of the month, Charles and the Court were finally got under way for Rheims, with Joan and her army, a great cavalcade, very insufficiently provisioned. Their

way lay through several towns garrisoned by Anglo-Burgundian troops, and acknowledging the Anglo-Burgundian rule. The first of these was Auxerre, which declared itself neutral, and was thus passed by upon the advice of La Tremouille, the King's favourite, and to the indignation of the Maid and the captains. St. Florentin and Brinon-l'Archeveque submitted at once, then the army came to Troyes, a town which had been of considerable political importance since the signing of the famous treaty which bore its name. Anglo-Burgundian feeling was strong within its walls, and its gates remained obstinately closed. The royal army invested the town closely, and maintained this position for above three days. The King's counsellors were all for retracing their steps and giving up the venture, for in truth they were in a precarious condition, without sufficient money, food, or siege material: The Maid implored them to have a little patience, and in the end Troyes capitulated. The inhabitants yielded at the instances of Jean Laguisé, their Bishop, who had leanings to the French side. They were preached almost into a state of panic by Brother Richard, the wandering friar, who foretold the end of the world. The people saw Joan waiting, ready to attack; they also beheld (so they averred) a cloud of white butterflies fluttering about her standard. They knew for certain she was no mortal Maid, were troubled in spirit, and took refuge in their churches.

Charles entered Troyes on the 11th of July.

Châlons-sur-Marne delivered up its keys with little ado, and Rheims, much influenced by the example of the other good towns, and marking with an observant eye the signs of the times, the increase of French power and the decrease of English strength, Rheims received Charles VII. its King, Regnault de Chartres its Bishop, and a full and free pardon for its past Anglo-Burgundian sympathies.

Immediately preparations for the coronation were put

in hand, and the night of the 16th of July was turned into day, that all things might be ready for the morrow. It is well to know that the good citizens were successful in their endeavours. Three Angevin gentlemen wrote a letter to the Queen (Marie of Anjou) and to her mother, the Queen of Sicily, thus describing the ceremony : " And it was a great thing to see this fair mystery, for it was solemn and adorned with all necessary things, as was fit, both royal attires and all other things, as if they had been ordered beforehand, and there were so many people that we cannot number them in writing, nor tell of the great joy that there was." Early in the morning four great lords mounted their horses—to wit, the Marshals of France, de Rais and de Boussac, the Lord de Graville, Grand Master of the Arbalestiers, and de Culan, the Admiral. All four were armed *cap-d-pie*, and very well accompanied, for they rode to the abbey of St. Remy to receive and to escort the *Sainte Ampoule*, the sacred and mysterious vessel containing the miraculous oil for the King's anointing. They swore and made themselves sureties for the safety of the relic. Then the Abbot of St. Remy hung the *Sainte Ampoule* about his neck and accompanied the four knights to the door of the cathedral of Rheims, where he delivered the miraculous phial to the Archbishop of Rheims, who laid it upon the high altar. But the four knights rode into the cathedral on their horses, and dismounted at the entrance to the choir. Here Charles sat in his appointed place. He swore to guard the peace of the Church and her privileges, to keep the people from exactions and unjust taxation, and to govern with justice and mercy. After this, the Duke d'Alençon knighted the King.

Berry, the French King-at-Arms, summoned the twelve peers of the realm, and they came to the High Altar. Representatives were chosen for those who were absent, for example, the Duke of Burgundy.

" My lords the Duke d'Alençon, the Count of Clermont,

the Count of Vendome, the Lords of Laval and La Tremouille, were there in royal robes . . . representing the peers of France ; my Lord of Albret held the sword before the King during the said mystery ; and for the peers of the Church there were, with their crosses and their mitres, my lords of Rheims and of Châlons, who are peers, and instead of the others, the Bishops of Seez and of Orleans, and two other prelates. And the said Lord of Rheims led the said mystery and ceremony, as was his right.” So write the Angevin gentlemen.

There were also present René of Anjou, the young King of Sicily, the Duke of Lorraine, and the Damoiseau of Commerci. The service was long, full of ritual and brilliant ceremonial. It endured from nine in the morning till two in the afternoon. When at length the crown was set upon the King’s head, all the peers laid their hands upon it, and a great shout went up from the concourse that was in the cathedral, and echoed in its lofty heights to the remotest rafter :

“ *Noel ! Noel ! Noel !* ”

Banners were waved, painted shields raised. The light from a hundred candles flashed upon harness of silver and steel, upon cloaks of crimson velvet, miniver, and cloth of gold. The air was heavy with incense from the swinging censers, and full of the holy chanting of monks.

In that great assembly the Maid stood close by her King, holding her standard in her hand. She said, “ it had shared the pain, it was only right it should share the honour.” They say that she bore herself very sweetly. When the King had been crowned, she dropped weeping at his feet, and said : “ Gentle King, now the pleasure of God is accomplished, who wished that you should come to Rheims to your consecration, to show that you are King indeed, and him to whom the kingdom belongs.”

Now Jacques d’Arc, the Maid’s father, had journeyed

to Rheims to see his child, and the King treated him well, and gave him a present of money. It would be hard to tell what he thought of all the affair, and of his daughter Joan's estate. It is very likely he saw her ride through the town at the King's side when he went to St. Marcoul, according to the custom, to touch those who were sick of the King's evil. She rode armed, with her standard unfurled. "And when her armour was taken off," says the chronicler, "she was dressed like a young knight, shoes laced upon the outside of the foot, tunic, and hose, with a little cap upon her head. And she wore very fine clothes of cloth of gold, or of well-furred silk."

Now that Charles was King indeed, the Maid implored him to come at once to Paris. He had his crown, he must gain his capital. Here speed alone would serve him, for the Duke of Bedford's reinforcements were already nearing the city, which for the moment was poorly garrisoned, ill-defended, full of disaffections to the Anglo-Burgundian rule, of plots and malcontents.

Philip, Duke of Burgundy, watching the course of events and the swift turn of Fortune's wheel with an extremely wary eye, took up a safe position upon the fence, and held himself ready for anything. His position was convenient. It enabled him to give his distinguished patronage to a sort of mystery play presented in Paris, of which the Duke of Bedford was stage-manager. After a solemn procession, there was read before my Lords of Burgundy and of Bedford (who seemed as close and as affectionate as brothers), and a vast concourse of citizens, a piteous recital concerning the assassination upon the bridge of Montereau. The reading was duly followed by loud murmurs of indignation, and a general oath was sworn of hatred towards the party of King Charles VII., and fidelity to the Anglo-Burgundian rule. After this pathetic ceremony, Philip promised the Regent moral, military, and financial aid.

This was upon the 15th of July. But upon the 18th, the Duke of Burgundy's ambassadors were already at Rheims, holding councils with Charles VII. and his advisers, and incidentally hindering the preparations for the campaign, which should have been so imminent, and the departure of the army for Paris. The Burgundian policy appears so transparent in its simple iniquity, that it is hard to understand how a child could for a moment be deceived by it. Yet the Duke of Burgundy's power was held in extraordinary respect, and it is quite true that in his hands, more than in any other man's, lay the fate of France and the fortune of England. He was the much desired of both parties, and each side courted him continually. He played them off against each other, and reaped the accruing advantage to himself.

The Maid was quite aware of his value as an ally, and would have been the first to welcome his honest overtures, but she and her captains, and indeed every man of understanding, common sense, and integrity, detected his entire lack of good faith upon this occasion. Only the Archbishop Regnauld de Chartres, La Tremouille, and the King, whom they held in subjection, clung to a fixed idea—negotiation with the Duke of Burgundy. At this point, or a little later, they concluded a truce with Philip, and a secret treaty in which the Duke of Burgundy agreed to hand Paris over to the French in a fortnight's time, and not a blow struck. The transaction is characterized by an innocence quite pastoral.

Thus the Duke of Burgundy caused the Maid's party to lose time, and sowed dissension on ground that was only too fertile. Never more than half-hearted, Charles was now absolutely afraid of gaining military successes. He must restrain the patriotic party or offend the Duke of Burgundy. By his own weakness, or by the ineptitude or jealous treachery of his counsellors, he had placed himself in a lamentably false position.

Under the circumstances, military operations languished. The Court and the army moved from place to place, with an aimlessness and want of result, less suggestive of a campaign than of a travelling circus in a bad way. Charles went continually southwards towards his beloved retreats on the banks of the Loire. Cities which had been gained for him lost confidence, and became naturally apprehensive as they observed his tactics.

As for the poor Maid, it is grievous indeed to think what nights and days she must have passed. She knew she could last but little more than a year, and said so often, and yet her time was flung away. She feared only one thing, treachery. Walking innocently, she was the centre of intrigue, mysterious and dubious transaction, double-dealing and suspicion.

In that time she carried a thoughtful countenance, and a heavy heart under her white armour. It is probable that she considered much as she rode or waited, and lost many illusions. Her deep eyes, looking out towards the horizon, beheld a tiny cloud there, no bigger than a man's hand.

About the middle of August, the King having been obliged by a movement on the part of the enemy to go a little northward against his will, passed with his host through Crespy in Valois, and the poor people about there cried "Noel!" and wept for joy when they saw him.

The Maid, who rode between Dunois and the Archbishop of Rheims, was well content, and said :

"In God's name, this is a good people and pious, and when I die I would I might be buried in their country."

Then Dunois (or the Archbishop) asked her :

"Joan, do you know when you will die, or in what place ? "

But she said, "No, I cannot tell ; it shall be where and when God pleases, for I am not certain of time nor place

more than you are yourselves. But I would it were my Lord's pleasure that I should lay down my arms and go home to my father and mother, to serve them and keep the sheep with my sister and brothers, who would be glad to see me."¹

Shortly after this incident, Charles the *fainéant* was at Compiègne arranging truce after truce with the Duke of Burgundy. There was great exchange of words; the Duke still promised the surrender of Paris, but in the meantime demanded that Compiègne should be given up to him. The King agreed, but the loyal town would not be given up, and thus won Joan's undying regard.

The prestige of the Maid and her victorious captains was so great that, in spite of all, strong places sent in their submission daily; Creil, Pont-Sainte-Maxence, Choisy, Gournay-sur-Aronde, Chantilly, and others did so, and St. Quentin, Corbie, Amiens, Abbeville, all considerable towns of Picardy, would have obeyed the lifting of the King's finger. But he did not lift it, preferring to bend his back to the Duke of Burgundy's yoke.

The Maid could bear it no longer. She called the Duke d'Alençon to her, and said: "My pretty Duke, make ready your people and those of the other captains, for I would see Paris closer than I have seen it yet." And they two left Compiègne on the 23rd day of August, and many armed men with them, and on the 26th came to St. Denis, where they lodged. Then Charles, finding himself left almost alone at Compiègne, and being thus ill at ease, was fain to follow them, which he did with a very bad grace.

The time from the 27th of August till the 8th of September was occupied by both sides in preparation, and in skirmishes of more or less importance in the neighbourhood of Paris. Within the town, the authorities showed

¹ This is curious, for at the time of speaking it is almost certain that Joan's only sister was dead, and one of her brothers, at least, was with her.

great energy in bolstering up the loyalty of the citizens, and in strengthening the defences of the walls. The Duke d'Alençon endeavoured to obtain an understanding with certain inhabitants supposed to be well affected towards the French cause, but his efforts met with little success. Paris, well fortified, well garrisoned by two thousand men, must be taken entirely by force of arms.

The 8th of September, the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, was the day chosen for the attack.

The Maid and her army left La Chapelle, where they lay, at eight o'clock in the morning. It has been said that the great lords and captains never intended a serious action upon this occasion, but desired to confine themselves to a "feat of arms," a demonstration, or a skirmish on a large scale. However this may have been, the Maid's was no trifling mood—she was for entering the city on that day, and for bringing her people with her. She divided her army into two bodies, one of which was to attack; the other half was to remain in reserve, in the shelter of a hill (near to the pig-market, and afterwards called the Hill of the Windmill), in order to keep a watch for possible sorties from the St. Denis Gate.

The attacking party proceeded to the Gate of St. Honoré, where, fighting with the Maid, they obtained an immediate success and captured the outer fortifications of the gate. Joan, standard in hand, and followed by the boldest of her men, leapt into the dry moat. She was greeted by a shower of missiles from the besieged, and sharp fighting followed. She crossed the moat however, and gained the top of the further bank, only to find another moat filled with water, and of unknown depth. With admirable courage she stood her ground, a mark for the enemy's archers. She gauged the depth of the moat with her lance; she called upon the city to surrender; she caused faggots to be brought and thrown into the moat to

fill it. While she fought and laboured thus, bearing herself as the bravest of the brave, an archer shot her standard-bearer, so that he fell dead at her side, and she herself was wounded in the thigh.

They carried her out of the heat of the battle. She continued to urge on her soldiers, and bid them to fill the moat, to take the city, assuring them again and again that it was theirs. Indeed, within the walls of Paris there was evidence of distress, even of panic. People ran hither and thither, crying that all was lost; they shut themselves into houses and churches, barricading the doors. But the French were slow to push their advantage. The sun set, they became weary. Joan lay wounded and helpless, sick at heart. The captains suspended the attack.

Joan protested with all her might. She implored them to persevere; but they had lost heart and desire, if ever they had had them. She, God knows, had spirit enough, and would have gone on fighting alone, if she could have stood on her feet. As it was, Alençon, de Gaucourt and others were obliged to use gentle force to get her away. They brought her back to La Chapelle. But she repeated, "By my staff, it might have been taken—it might have been taken."

The next morning she rose very early, in spite of pain and fever, and calling the Duke d'Alençon, who was faithful and constant, she made ready to return to the attack. The Lord of Montmorency, and fifty or sixty with him of the chivalry of France, came riding away from Paris and joined the Maid's standard. So she was greatly encouraged. But presently René d'Anjou and the Count of Clermont came up in hot haste with orders from the King, that the Maid and all the captains should return immediately to St. Denis. And so perforce it was done.

The Maid and Alençon made a last attempt. They threw a bridge across the Seine opposite St. Denis,

that they might attack Paris suddenly from an unexpected quarter. Without a word, the bridge was destroyed in the night, "by order of the King." The enterprise was abandoned.

A little ceremony, a few more councils, and Charles was away. On September the 13th he left St. Denis, and headed for the Loire country. A large portion of the army was disbanded. The great captains dispersed and went about their business, or to their own homes. The Duke d'Alençon went to Beaumont, where his duchess awaited him. Once more the fire of French patriotism, which the Maid had relighted and fanned to a flame, flickered and burned low. The reaction set in. Charles was tired of effort and endeavour. Hope and faith, ardour and valour, faded away. The Maid's army, chanting priests, caparisoned steeds, bright harness, lances, swords, and plumes, was scattered. Joan hung up her white armour in the ancient abbey of St. Denis, for an offering to God.

The autumn drew on with its shadows and its sad white mists, and the shadows gathered and deepened about the path of the brave and lonely child who remained faithful to her post and her trust, and would not return to her pastoral home, because her work was not yet ended. After the spring of glory and the summer of achievement, it was hard to face the autumn and winter of disappointment. Joan's comfort lay in the consciousness of work well done. She could look upon Orleans happily delivered, and upon its grateful people who loved her; upon great tracts of country and many good towns freed from the foreign yoke; upon bad counsellors defeated by sheer integrity and simplicity; upon a King crowned in spite of himself; upon an enemy severely checked, if not expelled from the land; upon a nation awakened once for all from deathly sleep, goaded into action, forced to take account of itself, to learn a lesson never to be forgotten.

These were good things to think of in a dark time, and the Maid had need of them. King Charles moved from place to place, of those castles of his predilection in the region of the Loire, and he took the Maid with him, she being very low and sad. The King was kind to her, in his way, and continued always to do her considerable honour. At her request he exempted the villages of Domrémy and Greux from taxation, and the exemption remained good for centuries. He also ennobled the Maid's family, the succession to obtain in the female, as well as in the male line, which was a rare provision. After this, Joan's two brothers took the name of Dulys. Joan lived softly, and had bright and splendid clothes to wear, which she did not at all despise, as some have it. On the contrary, she admired them very much, and they were something of a solace to her, for after all she was but a girl. Nevertheless, inaction weighed upon her heavily, and she beat at the bars of her gilded cage. She knew that the King neglected his conquests that had been dearly won. Abandoned towns were falling back into the enemy's hands. Reclaimed lands were overrun with marauders. The Maid begged hard to be employed. The Duke d'Alençon would have taken her with him for a campaign in Normandy, but the King would not let her go, neither would he allow her to turn her face towards Paris. But he held a council at Mehun-sur-Yèvre, where it was decided to send an expedition against La Charité and Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier, two strongholds of the enemy, situated upon the upper Loire. The captain of La Charité was one Grasset, a free-lance; a Spaniard, his nephew by marriage, held Saint-Pierre-le-Moustier. It was to this latter place that Joan and the Sieur d'Albert first came with the army which they had in command, and laid siege to it.

Jean d'Aulon, the Maid's esquire, tells the strange story of the final attack: "An assault was ordered to be made

against the town," which resisted, in spite of every effort on the part of the assailants, so fiercely that they were quite beaten back, and obliged to retreat. D'Aulon himself was wounded in the heel, and could not walk, but he beheld the Maid almost alone before the walls of St. Pierre, not having retreated with the rest. He "mounted a horse and went immediately to her aid, asking her what she was doing there alone, and why she did not retreat like the others. She, after taking her helmet from her head, replied that she was not alone, and that she had yet in her company fifty thousand of her people; and that she would not leave until she had taken the town." "And," adds d'Aulon, "whatever she might say, she had not more than four or five men with her at that time." Nevertheless, she called out in a loud voice for faggots and bundles to bridge over the trenches, and the soldiers returned instantly to do her bidding, and throwing themselves upon the place in an ecstasy of renewed enthusiasm, they took it.

Next the Maid went to La Charité. By this, it was mid-November. The days were short for fighting, and the weather turned bitter cold. Joan's army was small. It was lacking in every necessity. She sent to the King for supplies, which he did not give her. She wrote to the good towns asking them, for their loyalty's sake, to provide her soldiers with food, with clothes, money, arms, and ammunition. Bourges sent her what it could, and Orleans, the faithful city, was prompt and generous. But it was not enough. La Charité was strong and held out. The King sent nothing. The Maid and d'Albret waited till they could wait no longer, and were forced to raise the siege.

Joan came back to Court grieving over the failure that was no fault of hers, and Charles welcomed her, upon the whole not ill-pleased with the turn events had taken. Her

energy was inconvenient to him (at this time when he had concluded secret truces with Burgundy), it had now received a check—her prestige was a little diminished. Unkingly, and unknightly, he suffered the odium of defeat to dim her bright shield. Perhaps she must now be more restrained. If she should suggest fighting farther afield, perhaps armies might not be quite so eager to follow her. Suppose these contingencies to arise—well, the royal policy would not be the worse served.

All through the winter, the Maid was quiet enough. She accompanied the King in his peregrinations, or went independently to visit the good towns that she had delivered, where the people loved her. In January she was at Orleans, where the burghers provided her with royal entertainment. Later she was interested in the marriage of Heliote, the daughter of the Scotch painter who painted her banner. At her request the citizens of Tours provided wine for the wedding-feast. She spent much time in the churches at prayer, was often grave and given to thought. She was comforted by the Church's means of grace, and had pleasure in the gracious and innocent society of little children.

By this time the poor Maid must have learnt and realized something of the ways of the world, and discovered for herself many and many a bitter truth. The vagaries of public opinion, the quality of a King's honour, the deceptions carried out in the name of religion, the mass of intrigue called politics, the self-interest dignified by the name of patriotism, the insignificance of a promise—she had ample time now to consider all these things, scarcely dreamed of in the philosophy of Domrémy.

A perceptible change came over her. Modest, gentle, resigned to God's will she had always been, but now there came to her a sort of unquestioning patience, infinitely pathetic, which remained with her till the last day at Rouen. She was always faithful and loyal, always coura-

geous, the bravest of the brave, but her confidence in man (not in God) was a little shaken. Of some persons she was immediately suspicious ; she feared treachery. It is little wonder that she lost buoyancy, and that her charming gaiety was quenched for ever. From the first she had been reasonable, "a model of sweet congruity," ready with her answers, possessed of a common sense which is a continual delight. She lost much of her rustic crudity, whilst she kept rustic freshness and directness of thought, and gained considerably in logical power of arrangement. So she grew and developed in her fourfold character of soldier, patriot, woman, and saint.

Before the end of winter, Joan was cheered by news of La Hire, her comrade, who had taken the town of Louviers and Château Gaillard (Cœur-de-Lion's "Saucy Castle"). By Easter-time, or earlier, all truces with Burgundy having lapsed at last, the Maid once more took the law into her own hands, and saying nothing to anybody, she left the King and the Court. It was for the last time.

With no very great following, she took horse in the cold spring, and came first to Lagny-sur-Marne, for, she said, "The inhabitants make good war against the English of Paris and elsewhere." About Easter week her Voices told her that she must fall into the enemy's hands before St. John's Day. This they repeated to her almost daily, and yet she showed no fear, but continued to go about her business, taking her place in the forefront of danger, bearing herself gallantly in small siege and skirmish.

Compiègne was an important town in the north of France. It was, as it were, the very gate of Charles VII.'s realm. The Duke of Burgundy much desired to have Compiègne, to make it an open gate for the entry of his power into the kingdom. And Charles had been on the point of yielding it up to him. But the good citizens of the town would not agree to this arrangement, and shut

the gate of France in the Duke of Burgundy's face. Nevertheless, Philip's heart was set upon Compiègne, and scarcely was the truce expired, when he stretched out his hand towards it. About April the 17th he took the field, and as a preliminary measure made himself master of several small places in the neighbourhood.

The Captain of Compiègne was named Guillaume de Flavy. His town was large, strong, and well fortified. It was protected on the north by the river Oise, on the south by a great forest. The besiegers gathered on the north of the town, upon the opposite side of the river, which possessed a strongly fortified bridge. The Duke of Burgundy was at Coudun, to the east of Compiègne, Jean de Luxembourg was at Clairoix, Daudon de Noyelle was at Margny, and Montgomery and his English at Venette. These four villages were in a line facing Compiègne on the opposite bank of the Oise.

Very early on the morning of the 23rd of May 1430, Joan came to Compiègne with a small and hastily collected company of about five hundred men. She came from the southward through the paths of the forest, and safely entered the town. The same day, at five o'clock in the afternoon, she rode out to execute a sortie. Her plan was daring, but not foolhardy. She intended to surprise the garrison of Margny, to dislodge them, and push them back to Clairoix, and to profit by the ensuing confusion in overcoming the garrison at Clairoix, after this to turn round upon the English at Venette, who would have been held in check during this time by the men-at-arms left in Compiègne.

The plan was masterly and perfectly feasible. It was calculated to call into play just those qualities of courage and dashing precision for which the French fighter was famous. It had two weak points. It involved the pushing of the isolated Burgundian garrisons towards their own

main force. Secondly, the French must turn their backs on the English. The Maid, having provided for these contingencies as best she could, by the means already mentioned, took her risk and began the action.

At first, things fell out as well as possible. The garrison of Margny was taken completely off its guard, and with them Jean de Luxembourg, who chanced to be there with a small reconnoitring party. The Burgundians were routed and fell back pell-mell upon Clairoix. But the garrison of Clairoix was intent upon making a good fight, and the combat proceeded with fluctuating fortune. Out rushed the English from Venette to join the fray, and had immediately to do with Guillaume de Flavy and his men, as had been arranged. The day might yet have been won, but certain soldiers in the rear of the Maid's company took fright when they saw the English, and fled back towards the town. They soon came within range of Flavy's missiles, and he could fire no more without killing friends as well as enemies. The English, seeing their advantage, pursued it, and pushed their way closer and closer to the town. At this the Burgundians took heart of grace and pressed upon the Maid and those with her with great ardour.

"Back! back! Back to the town, or we shall be caught!" Thus the murmur arose among the Maid's soldiers. In vain she cried, "No! no! Think not of that, only think of falling on them, and they must be yours!" In vain she performed prodigies of valour, so that her very enemies marvelled. Surely, she and her people were borne back; she last of all, fighting every inch of the way. Before she could reach the bridge, the English were there to dispute her passage. Guillaume de Flavy, on the horns of an awful dilemma, raised the drawbridge and shut the gates of Compiègne, rather than admit the enemy into the town. He cannot be blamed, though

he cut the Maid off from her salvation. She, not having disguised herself, like Ahab at Ramoth-Gilead, was conspicuous on her good grey horse, with her gay cloak of scarlet and gold. Only d'Aulon was with her, and her brother Pierre, and a few knights. The little party was surrounded by Burgundians, crying, "Surrender! surrender! And give your faith."

She said, "I have given my faith, not to you, but to another."

Then one seized her by her cloak and dragged her from her horse, and held her fast. So the Maid fell into the hands of her enemies.

CHAPTER X

A SECOND CHAPTER ON THE VISIONS AND VOICES

IN a preceding chapter an attempt has been made to describe some of the strange and inexplicable experiences of Joan of Arc. Details regarding her vocation have been related, and incidents illustrative of her peculiar powers. It has been desired to do this from quite an uncritical standpoint. Facts recorded by contemporaries of the Maid have been allowed to speak for themselves entirely. Witnesses have gone unchallenged, though they have spoken strange things. Alleged miracles have remained unexplained, although they may have been susceptible of everyday explanation, ordinary occurrences interpreted as marvels have been allowed to retain their interpretation. The Maid's word has been accepted absolutely and literally, with no question or reference as to the condition of her mind or her body. Controversy, speculation, opinion, whether contemporary or modern, has been almost entirely banished from the narration. Actions, incidents, experiences, however curious, have been preferred to thought, of the fifteenth century, and the twentieth century alike. It was hoped that such a method of procedure might help to produce a representation gaining something in reality, of what it lost in scholarship; not critical, but picturesque, simple rather than erudite, familiar rather than learned, suggestive rather than complete.

In this second study of the Voices and Visions of Joan of Arc, it is proposed to be somewhat harder-headed and to take a different point of view. The career of the

wonderful Maid has given rise to so much controversy from her own time, down through the ages even to ours, there have been so many interpretations of her utterances, explanations of her personality, and theories about her experiences and her powers, that this aspect of it cannot be altogether neglected. How far the inquisitorial system of minute, critical analysis is profitable must remain an open question. It is certain that it possesses an extraordinary interest for the mind of to-day, a mind which is remarkably curious, ruthless, and destructive. How far, in the particular instance under discussion, valid or valuable conclusions are to be obtained, must also remain an open question.

Having taken up the critical position, the critic is at once assailed by grave difficulties of the most tantalizing description. The evidence at his disposal is certainly very full, fresh, interesting, and vivid in an uncommon degree, but it is not entirely trustworthy, for the bulk of it is obtained from the Minutes of two trials, the first notoriously interested and unjust, the second in strong reaction to the first, and itself not by any means above suspicion. Yet he must beware of discrediting overmuch what are by far the most valuable sources of his information. There is no royal road out of this dilemma of the trials. The critic is obliged to pick his way, appraising, accepting, and rejecting, comparing with information from outside sources, using his sense of fairness, his judgment, and his common sense.

But the trustworthiness of the Trial of Condemnation at Rouen, and that of the Trial of Rehabilitation at Paris, is not the critic's only stumbling-block. In Joan of Arc's own evidence, spoken by herself to her judges, he finds again matter for very great perplexity. He must often accept unconditionally, putting upon it the best and most lucid construction that he may, a collection of statements

which are often extraordinary, often inexplicable, and sometimes apparently irreconcilable. Here no narrow middle course is advisable, or even possible for him. It must be everything or nothing. If the Maid be convicted of a false statement, deliberate and unrecalled, her entire deposition becomes untrustworthy ; if she cannot be so convicted, she must command absolute credence. Of course it would be possible for a witness to speak truly upon some questions, and falsely upon others. But here that is not the point. Convict Joan of insincerity in one particular, and her sincerity as a whole is immediately impugned. If the Maid is proved insincere, then, as the children say, “there is no story.”

The critic must once for all make his great decision. Either Joan of Arc, with a mind pure and candid as a young child’s, was one of the greatest wonders that the world has ever seen, or she was an excessively astute fraud, or she was the unconscious victim of an excessively astute fraud.

These are the possibilities that present themselves to the modern consciousness. In the fifteenth century there was a fourth contingency. It was then very well to be believed that the Maid was a sorceress, or witch, a limb of the foul fiend, mistress of the enchantments of hell, a doer of “deeds without a name.” This conception of the Maid was certainly prevalent in her own day ; it is important, and will receive attention in this connexion. In a modern verdict, however, its influence may be ruled out. Nobody now thinks that Joan of Arc was inspired by Lucifer. Thus much at least is certain. Neither does any one seriously suppose that she was a deliberate impostor. Such a possibility does not seem to have been mooted in her own day, and indeed such a theory could scarcely be made to hold water. Putting aside all other considerations, the practical difficulties militating against it are all but insuperable.

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There remains the possibility that she was an unconscious, or partly unconscious, tool of political or religious ambition. This is no new idea. It was entertained by a few as early as 1435, and mentioned by historians in 1548 and 1570. This view was revived by Beaumarchais in 1730, and has recently once more been put forward with no little plausibility in a work remarkable for its fascinating charm.¹ It is urged that astute influential and religious persons, perceiving the peculiar pathological qualities of the Maid's mind and body, were quick to take advantage of these qualities in order to further their own ends. The theory is advanced with a great deal of ingenuity and a most engaging assumption of simplicity and common sense, but upon the whole it remains unconvincing. It shall be further discussed in its own place, together with other theories about the Maid which are but minor matters, one and all, compared with the capital question of Joan's sincerity. This, in the last resort, is of course not a matter of proof but of belief; it is a question of trusting the Maid's own word.

All, without noteworthy exception, who have studied her story accept the perfect ingenuousness and simplicity of her character as an established fact. There was at any rate one person who believed implicitly in Joan of Arc's Visions and Voices, in her Saints and her Divine Mission: that person was Joan of Arc herself. The fact is of paramount importance.

It has been said that the great fact of the Maid's sincerity once established, or rather accepted, discussions upon matters of detail are unnecessary or even superfluous. This is far from being the case, always providing that they are not allowed to confuse the main issue. It must be clearly understood that the vision, the effective vision, is the important thing, not the form, circumstance, or manner

¹ *La Vie de Jeanne d'Arc*, by Anatole France.

of appearance ; the "authentic tidings," not the quality of the Voice that bears them, the communicated power and not the method of communication. Upon the other hand the details, although subservient, are neither unnecessary nor superfluous. In the first place they are historically interesting, casting a curious light upon the customs, the religion, the mysticism, and the habits of mind of an age that is long gone by. In the second place they have human interest. They are the more tangible part of a mystery which furiously agitates the mind of man. Anxious to know something of the nature of a strange and elusive principle or cause of power, he cannot restrain his curiosity. He must inquire. If he inquires, he naturally does so in terms which are related to his own experience. A man tells his friend that he has had a vision, and the probability is that the friend immediately asks, "What did it look like ?" Possibly the better question would be, "With what results ?" Nevertheless, the former is the more usual.

It is legitimate then to examine the evidence with a view to discovering something of what Joan of Arc's Visions and Voices were like. To this end it is necessary to observe how she spoke about them, and what she said about them.

The Court that tried the Maid at Rouen had not the most elementary idea, nor the semblance of fair play ; in this connexion it was a perfect farce. It had its own very definite ends and aims, but these were not the ends and aims of justice, nor of true religion. Joan of Arc was as well aware of this as was Pierre Cauchon himself. The poor Maid bravely attempted to protest. She asked to be judged by a court composed of an equal number of those who favoured the French cause and those who were English in sympathy. She asked for her friends to bear witness in her favour. She asked to be confronted with persons whom she could answer freely, with reasonable hope of being understood ; she asked (with perfect legal right) that

her case might be tried before the Pope in Rome, the head of the Christian Church. She said piteously : " You put down in your case everything that is against me, but you write down nothing that is in my favour." And again : " Good lords, speak not all at once, but separately, for I cannot understand you." Her requests were refused or ignored. She was left a forlorn, unlettered child, with never a counsel or a man of law to help or to warn her, as was her undeniable right, to uphold a cause hopeless, condemned from the outset, to face a party of men vowed to her undoing—the wolves. She was ignorant, and knew it. She was the bravest of the brave, but she feared treachery, and confessed it. She hated long councils and inquiries. Theological subtleties she could not away with. She knew nothing of dogma and the schools, but she suspected that traps and pitfalls would be set for her, and with good reason. Small marvel if her attitude was one of terrified distrust.

Nevertheless, she summoned up her courage, put herself upon her guard as best she might, recalled and set in order such little lore as she might have, and did not despise her woman's wits.

This attitude of mingled suspicion and resolution is apparent from the first, when her judges required her to swear an oath to speak the whole truth upon all occasions. The Minute of the trial at Rouen bears record thus : " We (that is, the Maid's judges) did charitably warn and require the said Joan . . . to speak the whole truth upon all questions which should be addressed to her touching the Faith, and we did exhort her to avoid all subterfuges and shufflings of such a nature as should turn her aside from a sincere and true avowal. And in the first instance we did require her in the appointed form, her hand on the Holy Gospels, to swear to speak truth on the questions to be addressed to her. To which she did reply : ' I know

not upon what you wish to question me ; perhaps you may ask me of things which I ought not to tell you.' 'Swear,' we did then say to her, 'to speak truth on the things which shall be asked you concerning the Faith and of which you know.' "

The Maid answered to this : " Of my father and my mother, and of what I did after taking the road to France willingly will I swear ; but of the revelations which have come to me from God, to no one will I speak or reveal them, save only to Charles my King ; and to you I will not reveal them, even if it cost me my head, because I have received them in visions and by secret counsel and am forbidden to reveal them. Before eight days are gone I shall know if I may reveal them to you."

This decision seems to be extremely clear and definite, but it did not satisfy the tribunal of Rouen, for its members did again " several times warn and require her to be willing, on whatsoever should touch the Faith, to swear to speak truly. And the said Joan, on her knees, her two hands resting on the Missal, did swear to speak truth on that which should be asked her and which she knew, *in the matter of the Faith*, keeping silence under the condition above stated, that is to say, neither to tell nor to communicate to any one the revelations made to her."

Here for one day the subject was dropped. But the learned doctors, being perfectly well aware that they had not gained their point, made a fresh attempt at the beginning of the very next interrogation :—

" We warned and required her . . . to swear simply and absolutely to speak *truth on all things in respect of which she should be questioned.*" To which she answered : " I swore yesterday, and that should be enough." Finally she made oath to speak truth on *that which touches the Faith.* Immediately, upon the heads of this Maître Jean Beaupère said to the Maid, " First of all I exhort you, as

you have so sworn, to tell the truth on what I am about to ask you." This was very specious and clever, but Joan was not at all deceived by it, and answered at once :—

" You may well ask me some things on which I shall be able to tell you the truth, and some on which I shall not be able to tell it to you."

The issue is quite plain. Joan had sworn to speak truth upon "that which touches the Faith" (or, in another place, "that which touches the trial"). Her examiners wished to assume the right of putting upon this somewhat ambiguous phrase the interpretation that pleased them best, thus making the Maid's careful reservations of no effect. She, upon the other hand, understood fully the importance of retaining this right of interpretation. She would answer truly if she was allowed, but in this matter she must be keeper absolute of her own conscience.

It is really necessary that the peculiar nature of Joan of Arc's oath at her trial should be grasped at the outset, and borne in mind continually, for it is the key, and the only key, to much that is bewildering, inexplicable, and disappointing in the course of the interrogations to which she submitted. Certain things, she said, she could not reveal at all ; other things she could not reveal without express permission. In this her judges most unfairly refused to take her at her word. They questioned her about these things again and again, returning to the charge with a pertinacity worthy of a better cause. They made use of cunning argument, strategy, and art. They sought to confuse the Maid, or to weary her into a confession. Taking advantage of her innocence, they brought her to the verge of committing the indiscretions she most wished to avoid. " Spare me that," she sometimes said piteously. " Pass on, for I have not yet permission to answer you." In all things concerning her revelations, it must be remembered that she aimed at the utmost reticence. What

is recorded is never her willing confession to sympathetic ears, but her cautious utterance on compulsion. All she said was dragged out of her, and she knew that it would be used against her. Her judges urged her : " Speak, speak, speak. . ." Her Visions and adored Voices more often bid her to be silent ; to these heavenly monitors she was bound to preserve her allegiance. Besides this she was influenced by the hardly less pure and mysterious emotions of maiden reserve and modesty, of unwillingness to lay bare her child's heart, and the most sacred and secret elements of her being, to cheapen her moments of pure ecstasy, to give away her precious secret intercourse with the dear " Brothers of Paradise."

Upon the foundation of this persistent reticence, which, as has been seen, arose from complex causes, an interesting theory has been raised by one of the most sympathetic and conscientious historians of the Maid, Monsieur Henri Wallon.¹ He appears to believe that the experiences of Joan of Arc were actually limited to the hearing of Voices accompanied by light. This conclusion, which at first sight may appear superficial in the extreme, he supports with numerous carefully observed details and a very cleverly conceived line of argument. He attributes to the Maid a condition of mind which is curious and pathetic, a fascinating study belonging to the realm of psychology, the psychology of childhood. This attitude of mind is indeed merely suggested by Monsieur Wallon. It is a subject very elusive, delicate, and difficult to treat, but Wordsworth has written a poem describing a case somewhat analogous, as far as the mental condition under discussion is concerned, and Charles Dickens has dealt with the situation, more fully and more sympathetically from a different point of view. Wordsworth's poem, which bears the somewhat Philistine title, *Anecdotes for Fathers*, opens as follows :—

¹ *Jeanne d'Arc.* Henri Wallon.

"I have a boy of five years old,
 His face is fair and fresh to see,
 His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,
 And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk,
 Our quiet home all full in view,
 And held such intermittent talk
 As we are wont to do."

The father, looking with pleasure upon the natural beauties around him, mentally compares them (in an eminently grown-up manner) with those of his former place of abode. He comes to a probably legitimate, though not very illuminating, conclusion.

"Kilve, thought I, was a favoured place,
 And so is Liswyn Farm."

Then apparently the devil enters into him, and he begins to question the child.

"Now tell me, had you rather be,'
 I said, and took him by the arm,
 'On Kilve's smooth shore by the green sea,
 Or here at Liswyn Farm?'

In careless mood he looked at me,
 While still I held him by the arm,
 And said, 'At Kilve I'd rather be
 Than here at Liswyn Farm.'

'Now, little Edward, say why so ;
 My little Edward, tell me why.'
 'I cannot tell ; I do not know.'
 'Why, this is strange,' said I.

'For here are woods, hills smooth and warm.
 There surely must some reason be,
 Why you would change sweet Liswyn Farm
 For Kilve by the green sea.'

At this my boy hung down his head,
 He blushed with shame, nor made reply ;
 And three times to the child I said,
 'Why, Edward, tell me why ?'"

The unfortunate child is now driven to desperation.

“ His head he raised ; there was in sight,
It caught his eye, he saw it plain,
Upon the housetop, glittering bright,
A broad and gilded vane.

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,
And eased his mind with this reply :
‘ At Kilve there was no weathercock,
And that’s the reason why ! ’ ”

This is a very instructive story, and the general impression will be that Mr. Wordsworth comes very ill out of it, with his vulgar and insulting persistence. I hope it will be decided that “ little Edward ” broke no moral obligation. As for its application to the case of Joan of Arc it is not intended to be literal. Let there be no misunderstanding. It merely illustrates the possible working of a certain type of mind when impertinently harried and brought to bay.

Dickens, in an early chapter of his “ Great Expectations,” describes a similar case with very great insight and delicacy of touch.

It will be remembered that “ Pip ” was sent to play with Miss Haversham, the mysterious lady of Satis House, and that he spent there a day of strange, new, and violently alternating emotions ; that he saw there a beautiful and disdainful little girl ; that his intercourse with her both fascinated and disquieted him ; that he returned to his home at the village blacksmith’s, with his child’s heart sore and his child’s brain in a whirl, to undergo an inquisition from his eagerly inquisitive sister and “ Uncle Pumblechook.” Pip thus recalls his sensations :—

“ If a dread of not being understood be hidden in the breasts of other young people to anything like the extent to which it used to be hidden in mine—which I consider probable, as I have no particular reason to suspect myself of having been a monstrosity—it is the key to many reser-

vations. I felt convinced that if I described Miss Haversham's as my eyes had seen it I should not be understood. Not only that, but I felt convinced that Miss Haversham too would not be understood; and although she was perfectly incomprehensible to me, I entertained an impression that there would be something coarse and treacherous in my dragging her as she really was (to say nothing of Miss Estella) before the contemplation of Mrs. Joe. Consequently I said as little as I could, and had my face shoved against the kitchen wall (as punishment).

"' Well, boy,' Uncle Pumblechook began; ' how did you get on up town ? '

"I answered, ' Pretty well, sir,' and my sister shook her fist at me.

"' Pretty well ? ' Mr. Pumblechook repeated. ' Pretty well is no answer. Tell us what you mean by pretty well, boy.'

" . . . My obstinacy was adamantine. I reflected for some time, and then answered as if I had discovered a new idea, ' I mean pretty well.'

" After many unavailing attempts Mr. Pumblechook returns to the charge :—

"' Boy ! What like is Miss Haversham ? '

"' Very tall and dark,' I told him.

"' Is she, Uncle ? ' asked my sister.

" Mr. Pumblechook winked consent, from which I at once inferred that he had never seen Miss Haversham, for she was nothing of the kind.

"' Good,' said Mr. Pumblechook conceitedly. (' This is the way to have him ! We are beginning to hold our own, I think, Mum.')

"' I am sure, Uncle,' returned Mrs. Joe, ' I wish you had him always ; you know so well how to deal with him.'

"' Now, boy, what was she adoing of when you went in to-day ? ' asked Mr. Pumblechook.

"She was sitting," I answered, "in a black velvet coach."

"Mr. Pumblechook and Mrs. Joe stared at one another, as well they might, and both repeated, 'In a black velvet coach?'

"'Yes,' said I. 'And Miss Estella—that's her niece, I think—handed her in cake and wine at the coach window, on a gold plate. And we all had cake and wine on gold plates. And I got up behind the coach to eat mine, because she told me to.'

"'Was anybody else there?' said Mr. Pumblechook.

"'Four dogs,' said I.

"'Large or small?'

"'Immense,' said I; 'and they fought for veal cutlets out of a silver basket.'

"Mr. Pumblechook and Mrs. Joe stared at one another again in utter amazement. I was perfectly frantic—a reckless witness under the torture—and would have told them anything.

"'Where was this coach, in the name of gracious?' asked my sister.

"'In Miss Haversham's room.' They stared again. 'But there weren't any horses to it.' I added this saving clause in the moment of rejecting four richly caparisoned coursers, which I had had wild thoughts of harnessing. . . ."

Time has been spent and quotation at some length has been made in the interests of a theory which may appear to some impudent and to others extremely fantastic. Once again let it be said that it is not intended to suggest any direct analogy between, for instance, Joan of Arc's description of her interview with the Dauphin Charles, and the part played in it by angels and a golden crown, and Pip's romance of the velvet coach. Neither is it intended to cast the slightest aspersion upon the Maid's sincerity and integrity of character. Such aspersion would

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be unworthy. But it is intended to offer a suggestion, which may be of some little service in the study of Joan of Arc's Visions and Voices, both as a warning and as a guide.

The truth is that certain minds are prone to a peculiarly painful sort of dilemma, when the more ordinary obligations that they owe to the people and things about them appear to be at war with other and higher obligations, the nature of which may or may not be susceptible of explanation. They usually attempt loyalty to both sets of obligations ; this stage of the mental condition is characterized by a reserve which ought to be respected. If it is not respected the sensitive and harassed mind is driven to desperation, generally acting unaccountably to the outsider, in order to preserve at all costs the higher loyalty, the truest truth. The type of mind thus affected is generally pure, delicate, sensitive, imaginative, and modest—for example, the mind of a child. It is not said that Joan of Arc's psychological condition at the time of her trial was definitely such as has been described, but there is the possibility that it may have been so. The existence of this possibility necessitates the utmost sympathy and caution when dealing with the answers which she gave then, under insistent and impertinent pressure, especially concerning those subjects upon which she had expressly declared her inability to speak openly. Upon the other hand it casts light upon apparent obstinacies, inaccuracies, inconsistencies, and contradictions.

It is time to pass on to Joan of Arc's description of her Visions and Voices as she gave it to her judges in the trial of Rouen. After the description of her mission, which has been given in another place, the judges were eager to discover something definite about their captive's commerce with hidden things. Therefore they ushered in a series of questions in this manner :—

"How long is it since you have had food or drink?" It may be that they wished to prove that her Visions had a more or less physical cause in a weak bodily state resulting from fasting.

She answered : "Since yesterday afternoon."

Maître Jean Beaupère asked her : "How long is it since you heard your Voices?"

She said : "I heard them yesterday and to-day."

"At what hour did you hear them?"

"Yesterday I heard them three times—once in the morning, once at Vespers, and again when the *Ave Maria* rang in the evening. I have even heard them oftener than that."

"What were you doing yesterday morning when the Voice came to you?"

"I was asleep ; the Voice awoke me."

"Was it by touching you on the arm?"

"It awoke me without touching me."

"Was it in your room?"

"Not so far as I know, but in the castle."

"Did you thank it, and did you go on your knees?"

"I did thank it. I was sitting on the bed. I joined my hands ; I implored its help. The Voice said to me, 'Answer boldly.' I asked advice as to how I should answer, begging it to entreat for this the counsel of the Lord. The Voice said to me, 'Answer boldly ; the Lord will help thee.' Before I had prayed it to give me counsel, it said to me several words I could not readily understand. After I was awake it said to me, 'Answer boldly.' . . ."

"Has your Voice forbidden you to say everything on what you are asked?"

"I will not answer you about that. I have revelations touching the King that I will not tell you."

"Is it forbidden you to tell these revelations?"

"I have not been advised about these things. Give me a delay of fifteen days and I will answer you. If my

Voice has forbidden me, what would you say about it ? Believe me, it is not men who have forbidden me. To-day I will not answer. I do not know if I ought or not ; it has not been revealed to me. But as firmly as I believe in the Christian Faith and that God has redeemed us from the pains of Hell, that Voice has come to me from God and by His commands."

"The Voice that you say comes to you, does it come directly from an angel or directly from God ; or does it come from one of the saints ? "

"The Voice comes to me from God ; and I do not tell you all I know about it. . . ."

"The last two times you have heard this Voice did a light come with it ? "

"The light comes at the same time as the Voice."

"Besides the Voice, do you see anything ? "

"I will not tell you all. I have not leave. My oath does not touch on that. My Voice is good and to be honoured. I am not bound to answer you about it."

But they insisted : "The Voice from whom you ask counsel, has it a face and eyes ? "

"You shall not know yet. There is a saying among children that 'Sometimes one is hanged for speaking the truth.' "

This was all upon that occasion, but at the next examination Maître Beaupère returned to the charge : "Have you heard your Voice since Saturday ? "

"Yes, truly, many times. . . ."

"What did your Voice last say to you ? "

"I asked counsel about certain things that you had asked me."

"Did it give you counsel ? "

"On some points yes ; on others you may ask me for an answer that I shall not give, not having had leave. For if I answered without leave, I should no longer have

my Voices as warrant. When I have permission from Our Saviour I shall not fear to speak, because I shall have warrant.”

“ The Voice that speaks to you, is it that of an angel, or of a saint, or from God direct ? ”

Then Joan answered, naming her counsel for the first time : “ It is the Voice of St. Catherine and that of St. Margaret. Their heads are adorned with beautiful crowns, very rich and precious. To tell you this I have leave from Our Lady. If you doubt this send to Poitiers, where I was examined before.”¹

“ How do you know if these were the two saints ? How do you distinguish one from the other ? ”

“ I know quite well it is they ; and I can easily distinguish one from the other.”

“ How do you distinguish them ? ”

“ By the greeting they give me. It is seven years now since they have undertaken to guide me. I know them well, because they were named to me.”

“ Are these two saints dressed in the same stuff ? ”

“ I will tell you no more just now ; I have not permission to reveal it. . . .”

“ Are they of the same age ? ”

“ I have not leave to say.”

“ Do they speak at the same time, or one after the other ? ”

“ I have not leave to say ; nevertheless, I have always had counsel from them both.”

“ Which of them appeared to you first ? ”

“ I did not distinguish them at first ; I knew well enough once, but I have forgotten. If I had leave I would tell you willingly ; it is written in the Register at Poitiers. I have also received comfort from St. Michael.”

¹ By this there seems to have existed a record of the Maid's Trial at Poitiers. If so, it was never forthcoming and, beyond Joan's references, nothing is known of it.

" Which of these two appearances came to you first ? "

" St. Michael."

" Is it a long time since you first heard the voice of St. Michael ? "

" I did not say anything to you about the *Voice* of St. Michael ; I say I have had great comfort from him."

" What was the first Voice that came to you when you were about thirteen ? "

" It was St. Michael ; I saw him before my eyes. He was not alone, but quite surrounded by the Angels of Heaven."

" Did you see St. Michael and these angels bodily and in reality ? "

" I saw them with my bodily eyes as well as I see you. When they went from me I wept. I should have liked to have been taken away with them."

" And what was St. Michael like ? "

" You will have no more answer from me ; and I am not free yet to tell you."

Upon this occasion they were unable to get any more out of her, and indeed desisted from direct questions concerning her Visions for some little time. But on the 1st March the Maid's examiner inquired : " Was St. Gabriel with St. Michael when he came to you ? "

She said : " I do not remember."

" Since last Tuesday have you had converse with St. Catherine and St. Margaret ? "

" Yes, but I do not know at what time."

" What day ? "

" Yesterday and to-day ; there is never a day that I do not hear them."

" Do you always see them in the same dress ? "

" I see them always under the same form, and their heads are richly crowned. I do not speak of the rest of their clothing. I know nothing of their dresses."

" How do you know if the object that appears to you is male or female ? "

" I know well enough. I recognize them by their voices as they revealed themselves to me. I know nothing but by the revelation and order of God."

" What part of their heads do you see ? "

" The face."

" These saints who show themselves to you, have they any hair ? "

" It is well to know that they have."

" Is there anything between their crowns and their hair ? "

" No."

" Is their hair long and hanging down ? "

" I know nothing about it. I do not know if they have arms or other members. They speak very well and in very good language. I hear them very well."

" How do they speak if they have no members ? "

" I refer me to God. The Voice is beautiful, sweet, and low ; it speaks in the French tongue."

" Does not St. Margaret speak English ? "

" Why should she speak English when she is not on the English side ? "

" On these crowned heads were there rings, in the ears or elsewhere ? "

" I know nothing about it."

After this an attempt was made to connect the Visions and the Voices with the Fairy Tree of Bourlemont and the fountain near by, and this with the popular legends and miracles that were told about these places, and also with the sorceries and forbidden dark practices which, as was alleged, were carried on there by the inhabitants of Domrémy. After an artfully arranged digression the Maid's examiner returned sharply to the subject, and asked her, putting the question in a most unfair form :—

"What have you done with your mandrake?"

She was not confused, and answered simply: "I never had one. But I have heard that there is one near our home, though I have never seen it. I have heard it is a dangerous and evil thing to keep. I do not know for what it is used. . . ."

"In what likeness did St. Michael appear to you?"

"I did not see a crown. I know nothing of his dress."

"Was he naked?"

"Do you think God has not wherewithal to clothe him?"

"Had he hair?"

"Why should it have been cut off? I have not seen St. Michael since I left the castle of Crotoy. I do not often see him. I do not know if he has hair."

Considering some of the Maid's former statements, this is rather a curious answer. It seems St. Michael did not visit her in prison, but only her gracious lady saints. She said she had seen St. Michael with her bodily eyes, as plainly as she could see her judges in the Judgment Hall; it seems odd, then, that she knew nothing about his hair, but perhaps she was merely unwilling to speak more of it.

"Has he a balance?" asked the Maid's judges, anxious to know if she would describe St. Michael as he appeared in the stained-glass windows of churches, where he was often depicted with scales in which to weigh the souls of the departed. But she answered: "I know nothing about it."

Two days later they asked her: "Do you think that St. Michael and St. Gabriel have human heads?"

"I saw them with my eyes; and believe it was they as firmly as I believe there is a God."

"Do you think that God made them in the form and fashion that you saw?"

"Yes."

" Do you think that God did from the first create them in this form and fashion ? "

" You will have no more at present than what I have answered."

These last two very subtle questions are obviously aimed at establishing the objectivity or otherwise of the Visions.

A series of interrogations bearing upon the insinuation that the Maid demanded, or at the least accepted, worship from the people, allowing it to be believed that she was something divine, lead up to the following curious declaration :—

" How old was the child that you visited at Lagny ? "

" The child was three days old. It was brought before the image of Our Lady. They told me that the young girls of the village were before this image, and that I might wish to go also and pray God and Our Lady to give life to this infant. I went and prayed with them. At last life returned to this child, who yawned three times and was then baptized. Soon after it died, and was buried in consecrated ground. It was three days, they said, since life had departed from the child. It was as black as my coat. When it yawned the colour began to return to it. I was with the other young girls, praying and kneeling beside Our Lady."

" Did they not say in the village that it was done through you, and at your prayer ? "

" I did not inquire about it."

After pressing her for a long time as to the sign she gave the King, the Maid's judges asked : " Was the angel who bore the sign to your King the same angel who had before appeared to you ? "

" It is all one, and he has never failed me."

Then they inquired insidiously : " Has not the angel then failed you with regard to the good things of this life, in that you have been taken prisoner ? "

But she was firm, and answered : " I think, as it has pleased Our Lord, that it is for my well-being that I was taken prisoner."

" Has your angel never failed you in the good things of grace ? "

" How can he fail me when he comforts me every day ? My comfort comes also from St. Catherine and St. Margaret."

" Do you call them, or do they come without being called ? "

" They often come without being called ; and other times, if they do not come soon, I pray Our Lord to send them."

" Have you sometimes called them without their coming ? "

" I have never had need of them without having them."

" Has St. Denis appeared to you sometimes ? "¹

" Not that I know of."

" When you promised Our Saviour to preserve your virginity was it to Him that you spoke ? "

There was a trap laid for her here, for they said that it was not allowed to make vows except to God. She answered :

" It would quite suffice that I gave my promise to those who were sent by Him—that is to say, to St. Catherine and St. Margaret."

" Had you any letters from St. Michael or from your Voices ? "

" I have not permission to tell you. Eight days from this I will tell you willingly what I know." This is very curious.

" Did not your Voices call you ' Daughter of God, daughter of the Church, great-hearted daughter ' ? "

¹ St. Denis was the patron saint of France, but he had fallen into some disrepute since he had allowed his abbey to be taken by the English.

" Before the raising of the siege of Orleans, and every day since, when they speak to me they call me often, ' Joan the Maid, Daughter of God.' "

Later she was asked : " When your Voices come, do you make obeisance to them as to a saint ? "

" Yes ; and if perchance I have not done so I have afterwards asked of them grace and pardon. I should not know how to do them such great reverence as belongs to them, for I firmly believe they are St. Catherine and St. Margaret. I also believe the same of St. Michael."

" For those who are saints of Paradise, offerings are voluntarily made of candles. Have you never made an offering of lighted candles or other things to the saints who come to you, in the church or elsewhere, or had Masses said ? "

" No, unless it be in the offering of the Mass in the hands of the priest, in honour of St. Catherine, one of the saints who appeared to me. I have never lighted as many candles as I wish to St. Catherine and St. Margaret, who are in Paradise ; and I firmly believe it is they who come to me."

" When you place lights before the image of St. Catherine, do you place them in honour of the one who appears to you ? "

" I do it in honour of God, of Our Lady, and of her who appears to me."

" Do you place these lights in honour of St. Catherine, who has shown herself to you, who has appeared to you ? "

" Yes ; I make no difference between the one who has appeared to me and the one that is in heaven."

The aim of this questioning is quite apparent. The Maid said that she had honoured and worshipped her Visions with such observance as is reserved for the saints of Paradise. Her judges wished to insinuate that she had rendered worship to whom worship was not due ; they

wished to establish some difference between the St. Catherine who is in Paradise and the St. Catherine who appeared to the Maid. Presently they went further, and sought to suggest that her Voices and Visions might be manifestations not of good, but of evil. She had said : " Whatever things I did in my greatest undertakings, they always helped me, and that is a sign that they are good spirits." (Her argument was perfectly sound, and the best that she could have used.)

" Have you no other sign that they are good spirits ? "

" St. Michael assured me of it before the Voices came to me."

" How did you know it was St. Michael ? "

" By the speech and language of the angels. I believe firmly that they were angels."

" But how did you know it was the language of angels ? "

" I believed it at once and I had the will to believe it. When St. Michael came to me, he said to me: ' St. Catherine and St. Margaret will come to thee; follow their counsel. They have been chosen to guide thee and counsel thee in all that thou hast to do. Believe what they shall tell thee; it is the order of Our Lord.' "

" If the devil were to put himself into the form or likeness of an angel, how would you know if it were a good or evil angel ? "

" I should know quite well if it were St. Michael or a counterfeit. The first time I was in great doubt if it were St. Michael, and I was much afraid. I had seen him many times before I knew it was St. Michael."

" Why did you recognize him sooner at that time, when you say you believed it was he, than when he first appeared to you ? "

" The first time I was a young child and I was much afraid. Afterwards he had taught me so well, and it was so clear to me, that I believed assuredly it was he."

" What doctrine did he teach you ? "

" Above all things he told me to be a good child, and that God would aid me to come to the help of the King of France, among other things. . . ."

" In what form, kind, size, and dress did St. Michael come to you ? "

" In the form of a good *prudhomme*; ¹ of his dress and the rest I will say nothing more. As to the angels, I saw them with my eyes ; you will hear naught else about it. I believe the deeds and words of St. Michael, who appeared to me, as firmly as I believe that Our Saviour Jesus Christ suffered Death and Passion for us. And that which makes me believe it is the good counsel, comfort, and good doctrine which he has given me."

About this answer at least there is no shade of ambiguity ; it is perfectly simple, sane, and fearless. The judges of Rouen were tireless in their attempts to get Joan to commit herself with regard to the appearance of her Visions. To this end they questioned her, upon one occasion, with seeming artlessness, about the standard which she had had painted and carried into battle with her.

" Who prompted you to have painted on your standard angels with arms, feet, legs, and clothing ? "

" I have already answered you." (She had indeed told them that her standard was made by order of her Lord.)

" Did you have them painted as they came to see you ? "

But the Maid would not play into their hands, and answered at once : " I had them painted in the way that they are painted in the churches."

" Did you ever see them in the manner that they are painted ? "

" I will tell you no more."

¹ That is to say, literally, "an honest man"; probably it was intended to convey the idea of a knight of worthy estate.

Again they questioned her about a ring which she had. She did not know whether it was of gold or of brass. It had upon it three crosses and the writing "*Jhesus Maria.*"

"Why was it that you generally looked at this ring when going into battle?"

"... I had that ring in my hand and on my finger when I touched St. Catherine as she appeared to me."

"What part of St. Catherine?"

"You will have no more about it."

"Did you ever kiss or embrace St. Catherine or St. Margaret?"

"I have embraced them both."

"Did they smell sweet?"

"It is good to know that they smelled sweet."

"In embracing them did you feel heat or anything else?"

"I could not have embraced them without feeling and touching them."

"What part did you kiss—face or feet?"

"It is more proper and respectful to kiss their feet."

Upon the subject of Divine revelation in general the Maid was asked: "You say you have had many revelations from God by St. Michael, St. Catherine, and St. Margaret; if any good person were to come affirming that he had revelations from God touching your mission, would you believe him?"

"There is no Christian in this world who could come to me and say he had had a revelation but that I should know if he were speaking truly or not. I should know it by St. Catherine and St. Margaret."

"You imagine, then, that God can reveal nothing to any one which is unknown to you?"

"I know well that He can; but for me I should not, in this case, believe any man or woman if I had not some sign."

"Do you believe that the Holy Scriptures have been revealed by God?"

"You know it well. I know it well."

To these utterances of the Maid concerning her Visions and Voices there must be added one excessively curious detail. Brother Martin Ladvenu, Maître Pierre Maurice, and Brother Jean Toutmouillé all three visited Joan in her prison, very near the time of her death, in order to exhort and to admonish her. They afterwards were examined and deposed certain things upon oath. Ladvenu says: "We asked her if it were true that she had these Voices and apparitions. She replied that it was indeed true, and she continued so to tell us up to the end, but without stating decidedly, at least, so far as I understood, under what form the apparitions came to her. All that I remember is that she said that they came to her in great multitude and in the smallest size (*in magna multitudine et quantitate minima*)."

Master Pierre Maurice remembered also that the Maid said: "Angels appeared to her under the form of very minute things." And she added, "The spirits really did appear to me—be they good or be they evil spirits, they really did appear to me."

Brother Jean Toutmouillé corroborates his fellow-churchmen thus: "Jeanne did also say and confess that she had had apparitions which came to her in great multitude and in minute size—that is to say, under small forms; she did not perfectly explain the form or kind of her apparitions."

What is it that is so haunting about these visions of very small saints and angels? There is in the idea something whimsical, yet fearful and hair-lifting, something grotesque, and yet appealing, humorous, yet weird. It seems in the same instant to put the whole thing on the level of a fairy-tale, and to inspire it with the most convincing realism. It is instinct with that blending of fami-

liarity with awe, of intimacy with worship, which is the characteristic feature of medieval Christianity, and which remains even now the characteristic feature of a child's religion. It awakes in the mind associations tender, romantic, mysterious, echoes of the fresh, sharp *wonder* of childhood, the high faith and the zest in life that passes away so soon. Ah, Joan the Maid, how was it that you saw your little tiny visions? Was it in the red embers that burned on your father's hearth in dear, dear Domrémy? Or was it of cold nights in the camp-fires? Did they come to you upon the long sunbeams, or in the rainbow foam of breaking water in the brooks, or in the blue and misty evening air, as in that vineyard that we know of? When church bells rang, did they come to you borne upon the atmosphere's mysterious vibrations? Though they were so small, were their colours very bright and clear? Is it well to know that they were so? You are dead and cannot tell us. The English burnt you at Rouen. If they had not, yet in the course of nature you would still be gone. If you were here, it would please you to keep silence, very like. So we shall never know.

Now it is time to enter upon that matter of the Dauphin Charles's secret, and to see what the Maid told her judges concerning it. The whole question is very difficult, not susceptible of an entirely satisfactory explanation. On the 22nd February Joan gave some description of her first meeting with the King at Chinon, and said: "I recognized him among many others by the counsel of my Voice which revealed him to me. I told him that I wished to go and make war on the English."

"When the Voice showed you the King was there any light?"

"Pass that by."

"Did you see an angel over the King?"

"Spare me. Pass on. Before the King set me to work he had many apparitions and beautiful revelations."

"What apparitions and revelations had the King?"

"I will not tell you; it is not time yet to answer you about them. . . . My King and many others have heard and seen the Voices which came to me: there were there Charles de Bourbon and two or three others." She evidently means that the King and the lords witnessed one or more of her trances, not necessarily that they themselves beheld the Visions.

On another day they asked her: "Was there an angel over the head of your King when you saw him for the first time?"

"By Our Lady, if there were I know nothing of it; I did not see it."

"Was there a light?"

"There were more than three hundred knights and more than fifty torches, without counting the spiritual light."

"Why was your King able to put faith in your words?"

"He had good signs. . . ."

Next her judges asked the Maid plainly: "What sign did you give your King that you came from God?"

She answered no less plainly: "I have always said that you will not drag this from my lips. Go and ask it of him."

"Have you not sworn to reveal what shall be asked of you concerning the trial?"

"I have already told you that I will tell you nothing of what concerns my King. Thereon I will not speak."

"Do you not know the sign that you gave the King?"

"You will not have it from me."

"But this touches on the trial."

"Of what I have promised to keep secret I will tell you nothing."

"When you showed this sign to the King, did you see a crown on his head?"

"I cannot tell you without perjury."

The judges seem to have had an idea that Joan recognized the King at their first meeting, either by an angel above him, or by a mysterious crown upon his head. It should be observed that it is they, and not the Maid, who first make mention of these things.

On the next occasion they varied slightly the form of their question : "What was the sign that came to your King when you went to him ? "

"It was beautiful, honourable, and most worthy of credence ; the best and the richest in the world."

Of course, this answer by no means satisfied the judges. They continued their questionings on this subject, returning to it time and again, bringing it up unexpectedly and in new connexions to catch the Maid unawares. She, brow-beaten almost beyond endurance, clung to her resolve that her King's secret should not be dragged from her. The true sign, her mysterious knowledge of Charles's secret prayer, and his doubts of his own legitimacy, she kept loyally locked within her breast. But she was not able to maintain complete silence. Goaded and tormented, she was fain to answer her judges somehow. She took her cue from them, adopted from them the suggestions of "an angel" and "a crown," and spoke in an allegory—sufficiently plain to understand—of her relations with the King. She herself was the angel, God's messenger, who came to Charles with a bright crown—that is, the assurance that he should be King. After the manner of those who speak in allegories she sometimes confused the issues, for now the crown was a heavenly crown of glory and now it was the actual golden circlet that was placed on Charles's head in the cathedral at Rheims.

They asked her : "Does the sign still endure ? "

"It will last a thousand years and more. My sign is in the King's treasure." (Here she must speak of the actual crown.)

"Is it gold, silver, precious stones, or a crown ? "

"I will tell you no more. No man in the world could devise so rich a thing as this crown. . . ." Nevertheless she continued : "When my King and those who were with him had seen the sign and also the angel that brought it, I asked my King if he were satisfied. He answered, 'Yes.' Then I left and went to a little chapel close by. I have since heard that after I left more than three hundred persons saw the said sign. For love of me and that I should not be questioned about it, God permitted certain men of my party to see the sign in reality." The first part of this answer is pure allegory. The remainder is very difficult. A secret known to three hundred persons is no secret. Did the Maid refer to the three hundred knights whom in another place she mentioned as having been present at the first audience at Chinon, and merely mean that they were witness to the Dauphin's reassured and hopeful air after she had spoken privately with him, and that the sign was disclosed only to very few persons of discretion ?

The judges next inquired : "Your King and you, did you do reverence to the angel who brought the sign ? "

"Yes," said the Maid calmly. "I made a salutation, knelt down and took off my cap." And indeed, so she did to her lord the Dauphin, as in duty bound.

On Tuesday, the 13th March, as soon as they beheld Joan, her judges, with the air of propounding something quite fresh and original, asked : "What was the sign you gave your King ? "

She said : "Will you be satisfied that I should perjure myself? . . . I promised and swore not to tell this sign. . . . I said to myself, 'I promise not to speak of it to any one in the world.'" And then immediately : "The sign was that an angel assured my King, in bringing him the crown, that he should have the whole realm of France, by the means of God's help and by my labours. . . ."

"How did the angel carry the crown? And did he place it himself upon your King's head? "

"The crown was given to the Archbishop of Rheims in the presence of my King. The Archbishop received it and gave it to the King. I was present. . . ."

She merely spoke of the coronation at Rheims.

"Of what material was the said crown ? "

"It is well to know that it was of fine gold ; it was so rich that I do not know how to count its riches or to tell of its beauty. The crown signified that my King should possess the kingdom of France."

"Did you touch or kiss it ? "

"No ! "

They inquired how the angel came, and she said : "He came from above, and I think that he came by Our Lord's command ; he came in by the door of the room. When he came before my King, he did him reverence by bowing before him. . . . And the angel put him in mind of the great patience he had had in presence of so many tribulations. From the door the angel walked and touched the ground." Between the door and the King "there was quite the space of a lance length ; and he returned the way he came. . . . He was accompanied by other angels whom no one saw. . . ."

"All the other angels who accompanied him, had they the same appearance ? "

"Some resembled him well enough, others not. . . . Some had wings, others were crowned. In company with them were St. Catherine and St. Margaret. . . ."

"How did the angel leave you ? "

"He left me in that little chapel. I was vexed at his going ; I wept. Willingly would I have gone with him—that is to say, my soul."

She spoke of the crown frankly in the language of allegory. It was brought from God, she said. "No goldsmith in the world could fashion it, so rich and fair . . . it has a sweet fragrance which it will keep always if it is

well guarded." That is, the King will enjoy his sovereignty if he guard it well.

Brother Martin Ladvenu, who was with Joan on the day of her death and bore witness as to what she then said to him, declares: "I heard Joan say that although she had stated in her avowals and confessions, and had affirmed above in the course of the case that an angel from God had brought a crown to him whom she called her King, with all other details connected with this fact, nevertheless she did this day confess as follows: . . . No angel had brought the crown; it was she, Joan, who had been the angel, and who said and promised to him whom she called her King that if he would set her to the work, she would have him crowned at Rheims. There was no other crown sent from God."

The allegory had served its turn and was discarded, but Joan did not give away the King's secret, though once or twice she came near it.

Two more questions were brought up regarding the Maid's relations with her Visions and Voices. They need be only touched upon. Her judges asked her if she had ever disobeyed her counsel. She told them, once, when she endeavoured to escape from captivity by leaping from the Tower of Beaurevoir, where she was taken after her capture at Compiègne. This she did against the commands of her saints. But afterwards she repented and was forgiven and comforted. She was also asked more than once if her Voices predicted her deliverance from the prison of Rouen. It is almost certain that the Maid communed upon this question with her saints, and at first it seems that from what they told her she understood, or at the least hoped, that in her God's good time she should go forth safe and free to do more deeds of valour. Who may tell when it dawned upon her that she should go forth but to the fire, and that her last deed of valour should be done to win her martyr's crown?

An attempt has been made to present certain of the strangest points in Joan of Arc's character, to set forth such evidence as there is, as fairly as may be, with regard to the mysterious Visions that she saw, and the Voices that she heard, to arrive at some conception of one of the most elusive personalities that have ~~lived~~ lived in this world. Now it is high time to observe how men received and explained the more mysterious part of this personality, and how they still receive and explain it. And first it is necessary to indicate how the Maid impressed various sections of the society of her own day.

In the fifteenth century (as has been said before) the question was simply this: Joan the Maid was possessed of supernatural powers. This was hardly to be doubted. Did these powers proceed from God or from the devil? The common people of France received Joan wholeheartedly, and believed entirely in her purity, goodness, and power. They languished in dire need of help, and from the beginning of her warlike career, when the Maid entered Orleans by night, they hailed her as a deliverer sent from God. The citizens of Orleans, men and women, pressed to meet her, bearing lighted torches, with every demonstration of joy and reverence. They thronged about her; they struggled to touch her garments or her white horse, regardless of the dangers of the surging multitude. So men go through fire and water to touch the relics of a saint. All through the Loire campaign, and at the news of the coronation at Rheims, the ardour of simple souls increased. They adored the Maid as an Angel of Light, told of her battles and her miracles, honoured her as a soldier and victorious, put all their confidence in her, talked of her continually, and made sweet and poetic legends to show how marvellous was her childhood, and how dear she was to Heaven. Priests and holy men, of the more simple sort, as far as is known, believed with their flocks and thanked God for the Maid. Theologians and church-

men in high places did not accept her so easily ; the doctors who examined her at Poitiers, and the worthies, Jean Gerson and Gelu, pondered and debated lengthily upon the matter. Their conclusions were eminently non-committal. In no wise did they check the enthusiasm of the crowds. Up to the time of speaking (that is, before the relief of Orleans) they found nothing but good in the Maid. However, they would take no responsibility for the future. Belief in her they recommended as an act of individual conscience, not as an act of faith. They looked to events to prove or to disprove the validity of claims. Their attitude was upon the whole sane, wise, and moderate.

As for the Court of Dauphin Charles, exactly what it thought of the Maid's powers is difficult to determine. As concerns Charles himself, enough has been said of the sign that Joan gave him. The great captains, her companions in arms, believed that she had marvellous faculties and a mission from God. To this belief they bear record—Dunois, Alençon, La Hire, together with Bertrand de Poulengy, and Jean de Metz, her first followers, and Jean d'Aulon, her steward, and Louis de Contes, her page. It is the attitude of La Tremouille, Regnault de Chartres, and other self-seeking nobles and favourites about the King's person that gives pause. In the first place, they had no use for the Maid. With her simplicity, her clear eyes, her truth-telling, and her passion for action, she was a most upsetting factor in their scheme of a quiet life, with soft places and liberal pickings for themselves. She embarrassed and irritated them. It has lately been suggested that these politicians were in reality quite sceptical as to Joan's powers, believed her to be a mere hysterical visionary, backed by ingenuous and discontented priests ; that they exploited her infirmities, and employed her great prestige to the advancement of their own ends ; that they showed her, and sent her about with the army as a sort of *mascotte*, or luck. This theory rests upon insufficient

data. There is no evidence to show that the politicians of the court were a whit less credulous than their fellows. They were unscrupulous men, no doubt, but in the Middle Ages the most unscrupulous men were often the most religious, and very often the most superstitious. Through the maze of Court intrigue and deception that surrounds the matter, it seems that the Maid's enemies believed only too well in the Maid's powers. They opposed her as much as they dared, but at bottom they were afraid of her ; they disliked and dreaded a rule inaugurated by her, as they would have disliked and dreaded the end of the world and the Last Judgment. When she was taken captive at Compiègne they were probably relieved enough. It is certain they made no effort to rescue her. If they had regarded the Maid as their " Luck," they would have been desolated at her loss.

Having seen the opinion of the French side regarding the Maid, it is time to observe that of the Anglo-Burgundian party. Here also divergences of thought and feeling are discernible. Rough soldiers, men-at-arms, and other simple-minded people, the class, in fact, which corresponded to her warmest supporters upon her own side, hated her and feared her. They believed heart and soul in her supernatural powers. She was their sworn enemy and fought against them, therefore she could not be from God. Then she was inspired by the devil. They went in terror for their lives, and for their country, so long as she was at large, and they shouted with triumphant joy when she was taken prisoner. In this view the judges of Rouen, Pierre Cauchon and the others, and the doctors and masters of the University of Paris, heartily concurred. It was their business to give a proper ecclesiastical basis to the popular sentiment. The theologians of the French side had to sanction the proposition that Joan came from God ; the theologians of the Anglo-Burgundian side had to sanction the proposition that Joan came from Satan. This

they did most decisively. They tried the Maid, condemned her as a heretic and a sorceress, having commerce with the Evil One, and pitilessly burnt her at the stake. In so doing they played into the hands of the Duke of Bedford, and those who represented the English policy. The English lords were wont to go and gaze curiously at the captive Maid in the castle of Rouen. Probably they sincerely believed her to be a witch and a limb of the fiend. Had she not stricken panic with her sorceries into the hearts of their soldiers, so that they were overcome in the day of battle? To prove her an evil enchantress and then to be quit of her—such was their desire. So should the spell cast over the men-at-arms be broken for ever; so should Charles of Valois be humiliated to the earth, who had given credence to the word of a sorceress, and had allowed her to sit in his council, to lead his armies, and to conduct him to his coronation—a mockery and a sacrilege.

One thing was held in common by all contemporary opinions of the strange powers of Joan of Arc. It was unanimously decided that they were supernatural, mysterious, and serious factors to be reckoned with for good or evil.

In the present day the situation is greatly altered. It is no longer the fashion to refer mysteries to God or to the devil, simply, and with a more or less light heart. A more curious spirit of examination, analysis, and criticism is abroad. Professor William James, in a chapter of his book on *Varieties of Religious Experience*, which is very instructive in this connexion, has the following paragraph: "In recent books on logic, distinction is made between two orders of inquiry concerning anything. First, what is the nature of it? How did it come about? What is its origin, constitution, and history? And second, what is its importance, meaning, or significance now that it is once here. The answer to the one question is given in *an existential judgment* or proposition. The answer to the

other is a proposition of value . . . what we may, if we like, denominate a spiritual judgment. Neither judgment can be deduced immediately from the other. They proceed from diverse intellectual preoccupations, and the mind combines them only by taking them first separately and then adding them together.

"In the matter of religions it is particularly easy to distinguish the two orders of question. Every religious phenomenon has its history and its derivation from natural antecedents. . . ."

A very great deal of the modern study of the Visions and Voices of Joan of Arc is done from the existential point of view. It is asked over and over again, What made Joan of Arc see Visions? What made her hear Voices? Under what conditions did she come to believe that she had received a mission from God? What other persons, before, after, or during her time had similar ideas and experiences, and why did they have them? These questions and others of the same type are asked, and answered with more or less truth, and more or less ingenuity. They are questions of scientific and historical interest, but it cannot be said that the answers to them decide the further question, Of what use were these Visions and Voices? What was the effect and the significance of these experiences both upon the person who experienced them, upon her world, and upon the world at large? Once there, what was, and what is, their value?

The method of inquiring very particularly and minutely into the origin of things is applied to every department of life, and has of late made great strides. It is brilliant and it is useful, but it can never say everything. Its value is lost without the spiritual judgment which exists independently, and can never be directly deduced from it.

Now the consideration of the case of Joan of Arc from this purely existential point of view is perfectly legitimate, it cannot be in itself degrading or offensive; but it must

be limited. It becomes unjust if it professes to be final, or if it is used deliberately to discredit the reality of her religious life. Monsieur Anatole France has written his life of the Maid¹ from this point of view. It is a brilliant and excessively interesting piece of work ; but his reasoning and that of his friend, Doctor Dumas,² concerning the Visions and Voices rests upon a shallow fallacy. They speak of the Maid's physical and mental condition, of abnormal development and bodily qualities of hysteria and neurology, and make out a theory, possibly, though not necessarily exact, explaining the Maid's experiences as expressions of her organic disposition.

This sort of reasoning Professor James calls medical materialism. "Medical materialism," he says, "finished up St. Paul by calling his vision on the road to Damascus a discharging lesion of the occipital cortex, he being an epileptic. It snuffs out St. Teresa as an hysterick, St. Francis of Assisi as an hereditary degenerate, George Fox's discontent with the shams of his age, and his pining for spiritual veracity, it treats as a symptom of a disordered colon. . . ." Joan of Arc is the example of an unfortunate girl, probably subject to unilateral hallucinations or hemianæsthesia, whose affliction was cleverly used by astute churchmen for their own ends. "And medical materialism then thinks that the spiritual authority of all such personages is successfully undermined."

If, as modern psychology assumes, mental states are completely dependent upon bodily conditions, what medical materialists say is true in a general way. But, to quote Professor James yet once more, for his putting of the matter cannot possibly be bettered : "How can such an existential account of facts of mental history decide in one way or another upon their spiritual significance ? According to the general postulate of psychology just referred to,

¹ *La Vie de Jeanne d'Arc.*

² In *La Vie de Jeanne d'Arc* and *La Jeanne d'Arc de M. Anatole France*, G. Dumas, *La Revue du Mois*, May 1908.

there is not a single one of our states of mind, high or low, healthy or morbid, that has not some organic process as its condition. Scientific theories are organically conditioned just as much as religious emotions are ; and if we only knew the facts intimately enough we should doubtless see 'the liver' determining the dicta of the sturdy atheist as decisively as it does those of the Methodist under conviction, anxious about his soul. When it alters in one way the blood that percolates it we get the Methodist ; when in another way, we get the atheistic form of mind. So of all our raptures and our dryness, our longings and our pantings, our questions and our beliefs. They are equally organically founded, be they of religious or of non-religious content."

Although the theory of medical materialism may be new, true, and interesting, it is of no account in judging the value of Joan of Arc's religious experiences. Discussions as to the health of her mind and body are in this connexion utterly beside the mark. If the Maid had been stolid, placid, a sturdy peasant lass, these facts would affect the worthiness of her mission not at all, were it in itself not credible and profitable. And if her mission is proved true, credible, and profitable, what can it matter if she was visionary, emotional, hysterical, or if her father was subject to curious dreams ?

The Maid herself said : "I know my Voices are good, because they always give me good counsel. Whatever things I did in my greatest undertakings they always helped me, and that is a sign that they are good spirits." She did not judge her Visions so much by their origin as by the quality she perceived in them when they were once there.

In all that can be discovered about the Visions and Voices of Joan of Arc there is but one thing of capital moment, that is, the work that she did and the quality, in her, by which she did it. There is no doubt that the work she did is one of the world's wonders. An untutored child, from an outland village, she breathed ardent life into a dying cause ; she turned the tide of war, made cowards

courageous, roused a *fainéant* king, turned bandits into patriots, relieved a beleaguered city, and led a victorious campaign. Like a Vestal she guarded the vital spark of the national spirit of France, and would not let it be extinguished though she gave her life. It is said that in her day the land was full of mystics. Many of the young saw visions, and many of the old dreamed dreams. There was the cult of this and that, and there were prophecies and trances and miracles without end. The Maid's relations with the mystical elements of her period have been defined. She has been classified as a member of a special group of mystics. One point, however, has remained unexplained ; one question is unanswered. There were a hundred visionaries, there was only one Joan of Arc. The ninety-nine saw visions and heard voices, were carried away in rapturous exaltation—and remained ineffective. What was that unique quality in the Maid that made her such a contrast in this respect ? Faith, powers of prayer, powers of perseverance, single-mindedness, physical energy—all these have been possessed by others. The Maid might have had them all, and her heavenly monitions as well, and yet have lived and died on the Marches of Lorraine. How does latent genius develop ? Why does it become effective in some and not in others ? Sometimes it is a limitation, sometimes it removes all limitations. Why ? This is a secret.

It may be that among the unceasing and endless shifting and change, disintegration and combination of the cosmos, among the coming into being and the passing of lives and minds and characters ; the myriad elements of life, at rare intervals, combine in an ideal manner for the production of effective genius. In such fullness of time may have been born both the Maid and the moment. Who can say ? Perhaps it is idle to speculate. For the simple-minded and the faithful there remains a more perfect solution—it lies in the belief in the Power of God.

CHAPTER XI

JOAN'S TRIAL

JOAN OF ARC was taken prisoner without the shut gates of Compiègne by a simple archer called Lyonel. This archer was of the Bastard of Wandome's company, and he relinquished his prize to his lord, as in duty bound, who in his turn was fain to deliver the Maid to his own overlord, Duke John of Luxembourg.

The great family of Luxembourg had its representatives throughout the length and breadth of Christendom; from it had sprung both kings and queens, emperors and empresses. This John, who held the Maid of France as his prisoner, belonged to a younger branch of the family, and was himself a younger son. He had won his spurs in the service of the Duke of Burgundy, where his position was no sinecure, for he had seen much hard fighting by the time he held the Maid to ransom. He was then thirty-nine years old or thereabouts, covered with scars and blind of an eye.

When Joan was brought, disarmed, to the Burgundian camp at Margny, and all could see with their eyes that the Witch of the Armagnacs had been caught at last, the precincts resounded with shouts of victory and rejoicing. Duke Philip of Burgundy at once saw and spoke with her, and knights and gentlemen of his chivalry satisfied their curiosity in like manner. That very night (24 May 1430) the Duke sent runners post-haste with the good news to Lille, to St. Quentin, and to all his good towns, and even to the Court of Brittany; whilst Jean de Luxem-

bourg saw to it that the message reached Paris, and the anxious English.

The French party of course became immediately cognizant of their loss. The city of Tours instituted a public mourning. Regnault de Chartres himself informed Rheims. The text of his first report no longer exists, but there remain three later letters by his hand, which must be given, as they typify the attitude of Charles VII.'s counsellors towards Joan of Arc at this critical period. In the first, "The Archbishop of Rheims, Chancellor, gives notice of the capture of Joan, the Maid, before Compiègne, and how she would take no counsel, but did her own pleasure." In the second letter it is stated that "there came before the King a young shepherd, a keeper of sheep in the mountains of Gevaudan, in the bishopric of Mande, the which said neither more nor less than the Maid had done, and that he was bidden by God to set forth with the King's people, and that without fail the English and the Burgundians would be discomfited." It is also said (in a third letter written later), that "God had allowed the English to take Joan, the Maid, because that she had grown proud, because of the bright raiment that she wore, and because she had not done what God had bidden her, but had accomplished her own will and desire."

These words, written by the Archbishop of Rheims, the ecclesiastical head of the Armagnac party, spell the Maid's desertion by her own people. The inhabitants of the "good towns," indeed, and the humble poor, prayed for her deliverance, in collects which have come down to the present time. The Archbishop of Embrun, a just old man, wrote to King Charles, charging him instantly to do his simple duty in this matter: "To recover this girl and to pay her ransom, spare neither means nor money, nor any price however great, unless you would incur the indelible blame of a most culpable ingratitude." These words were

of no avail. According to the records of history, Joan of Arc was absolutely and entirely abandoned in her time of need by the King she had loved and served so well. No trace can be discovered of any attempt, by the Maid's party, to release her, either by ransom or by force of arms, or by threatening to hold responsible English and Burgundian prisoners, or by appeal to the Pope. There was nothing but cruel and dastardly inaction, and silence most dishonourable.

In the meantime, it will be understood that the opposite faction was not so slow to move. No sooner did Páris receive its despatches than the University (excessively Burgundian in its sympathies) wrote to the Duke of Burgundy and requested that Joan should be delivered over to Church justice and the Inquisition upon a charge of heresy. The Vicar-General of the Inquisition wrote at the same time, in the same strain, recommending his demands to the Duke, "true protector of the Faith and Defender of God's honour."

Thus the first claim was made, and the ball was opened.

Next there came, to the Luxembourg camp, hard by Compiègne, a man to parley. This man came in the name of religion. He had gold in his hand, the power of the sword at his back, and a grievance rankling in his heart. His name was Pierre Cauchon. He was the Bishop of Beauvais, and had been deprived of his see and his benefices through the successes of the Maid and the French party, against whom, consequently, he nourished a personal hatred. He had the Duke of Bedford's commission and the Duke of Bedford's money, the authority of the University of Paris and the Inquisition. He said that the Maid had been captured within the limits of his see (which is extremely doubtful, though not impossible) and that he was her rightful judge. This he was not, for he did not possess the necessary authority delegated from the Bishop of Soissons or of Toul. To these propositions Cauchon

added another. He said that King Henry VI., as the true King of France, could ransom the person of any prisoner of war for the sum of ten thousand francs.

Taken collectively, the Bishop's arguments were found convincing. There was a good deal of talk about chivalry and religion, honour and the Church, and the Maid was sold into the hands of her enemies for a sum of good hard English gold.

Pierre Cauchon, having concluded his bargain, went on his way rejoicing to Rouen, the great English stronghold, already selected, with very good reason, for the place of the Maid's trial. Here he communicated his good news to the Regent and to the waiting English lords, and set about elaborating and maturing his plans.

In the meantime, Joan, poor unfortunate, enduring the bitterness of captivity, was removed from the Burgundian camp. She was first taken to the castle of Beaulieu in Vermandois, of which the Bastard of Vendôme was captain. She was fairly enough treated, as a valuable prisoner of war, and had her own esquire, d'Aulon, to wait upon her. The two of them were anxious concerning the fate of Compiègne. D'Aulon feared greatly that it would fall into the hands of the enemy. Joan was brave and faithful. "God forbid," she said, "that any cities that the gentle King Charles has gained with my aid should be retaken by the enemy, whilst he does his best to keep them."

Compiègne was relieved, indeed, in the October following, by Vendôme and Xaintrailles, the English and Burgundian besiegers being forced to retreat ignominiously.

After a fortnight at Beaulieu, the Maid proceeded to the strong castle of Beaurevoir, some forty miles to the northward, near Cambrai, where she was lodged in a chamber of a high tower. At Beaurevoir, there dwelt two gracious ladies. One was Jeanne de Luxembourg, the aunt of Messire Jean, to whom she bore a tender affection. She

was old, noble, and saintly. The other was Jeanne de Bethune, the lord of Luxembourg's wife, who was reputed to be tender-hearted. It seems that these good women showed kindness to the Maid, their namesake: They gave her stuffs to make a woman's gown, but she could not use it, nor lay aside the man's dress which she wore, so to speak, as a uniform, and the outward sign of her mission. It is recorded that she said to her judges at Rouen: "The Demoiselle de Luxembourg prayed Jean de Luxembourg that he would not hand me over to the English. . . . I would sooner have changed my dress for the sake of these ladies than for any one in France, except my Queen, if she had asked me."

The days dragged by, and the weary nights, and the Maid thought long, and was more and more irked by her captivity. Like a poor caged bird, her spirit fluttered and struggled and was driven to desperation in its longing to be free. Her dear saints spoke with her, but did not prevail, and she either leapt or tried to lower herself from the window of her high prison. She fell, and was found insensible, but for a marvel not one of her bones was broken, and after a few days she recovered. She said that she had not tried to kill herself, but to escape, to go to the succour of the people in Compiègne, and because she would rather do anything than fall into the hands of the English.

In the month of September they took Joan to Arras, in the Duke of Burgundy's country. Here various persons visited her in her prison, amongst them a Scottish archer who showed the Maid a portrait of herself, fully armed, kneeling upon one knee, as she delivered a letter to her King. This was the only picture of herself that she ever saw. From Arras she was moved to Crotoy, and was lodged in a castle whose foundations were washed by the restless sea. Alençon, whom the Maid was wont to call her "pretty Duke," had been a captive here after the

piteous battle of Verneuil. His eyes and hers must have looked mournfully out upon the pale sands and the watery wastes ; they must have shivered as they heard the wind's moan and the sea-birds' boding cry. Here Joan received absolution and the sacrament from a priest, a fellow-prisoner ; here St. Michael came and gave her comfort, and gentle ladies from Abbeville visited her of their Christian charity.

The Maid left Crotoy at high tide, in a boat which carried her to Saint-Valery, from thence she came by way of Dieppe to Rouen.

She was a prisoner of the Church, and should by rights have been kept in a decent prison, well treated, and with women about her. Nevertheless, they led her to the ancient castle of Philip Augustus, a military stronghold. They put her in a dark tower, in durance vile, under watch and ward. In her cell was a plank bed, and a great iron cage, in which a prisoner could be chained in a standing position. Howbeit, no witness has left it on record that he saw the Maid confined in this cage. Chained night and day she certainly was, to a heavy wooden beam, her irons only being removed when she was led before her judges. She was guarded continually by a body of English men-at-arms. Five of the sort called *houcepailliers* were charged to keep her *always* in sight and in hearing. They were men of low degree, naturally coarse and brutal, and they were encouraged to mock and torment their prisoner. She was chained and helpless, young, and a woman, abandoned by every human power. Twice during her captivity she suffered from severe physical illness ; she had the expectation and the natural fear of a dreadful death continually with her.

Many persons visited the Maid in prison, whether out of curiosity or from other motives. Amongst them was Messire Jean de Luxembourg.

"Joan," he said, "I will yet save you by ransom if you will swear never more to bear arms."

"Out upon you, my lord!" she cried in anger. "I know you have neither the will nor the power. In God's name you mock me . . . these English will kill me, thinking when I am dead to win the kingdom of France. But if their numbers were increased an hundred thousandfold, they should not have the kingdom."

Then the Earl of Stafford, who stood by, drew his dagger in a passion, and would have slain the Maid for her boldness. But Warwick held his hand, saying that the time was not yet.

The Duchess of Bedford, with Lady Anna Bavon and a third matron, subjected the Maid to an examination which in the fifteenth century was not counted an outrage. There is nothing evil to be said about this princess, Burgundian by birth, English by marriage, who pronounced Joan to be what she claimed to be, and desired that nobody should molest her.

That poor child Henry VI. had been in residence at Rouen since July 1430, and he remained there throughout the Maid's trial. All she was made to suffer was done in his name, or in that of Mother Church. He was at this time about nine years old, with a sickly little body, and the soul of a religious recluse already in process of development. He was the sweetest-natured, the most pathetic, patient, and gentle of children, born out of time and out of place into a period of fire and sword. It is worth while to pause and consider for a moment the relationship into which the irony of fate forced these two innocents, the Maid and the peaceful little King. The two poor, pious children were in sympathy; they were born to know and love one another. And yet Joan looked upon Henry VI. as the arch-enemy of France and of God, and she was judged and done to death in his name.

The Maid was in Rouen, safe in English hands, which

would never let her go but to her death, awaiting her trial. What of Pierre Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais? Had he been idle all this time? It may be believed that he had not. He knew very well that he was at the beginning of a delicate and difficult piece of business, and that to terminate it satisfactorily would be greatly to his advantage. He had received generous payment for services already rendered, and stood to receive more, if all went well. Upon the other hand, the consequences of bungling would be unpleasant and probably dangerous. Under the circumstances only a fool would have proceeded carelessly, and Cauchon was anything but a fool. With infinite caution he defined the objects to be kept in view; with infinite caution he made his preparations.

The first and greatest English necessity was of course to get rid of the Maid. The English, not unnaturally, desired her death above everything. An English lord suggested that she should be put into a sack and drowned without more ado. The simplicity of this method did not commend itself to the Bishop of Beauvais. Suppose the quiet, somewhat mysterious, disappearance of the Maid an accomplished fact, might not the people's imagination become yet more impressed by the supernatural elements of her personality? Legend upon legend would certainly be repeated. It would be noised abroad that King Charles had received the succour of an angel who had returned to her place in the company of Heaven, and the news would scarcely tend to bolster up the hearts of English soldiers, and to drive panic from their ranks.

Before she died the death, the Maid must be discredited in the eyes of the world. She must be proved a heretic, an apostate, a witch, and a limb of Satan. She must be shorn of every scrap of prestige, then society must be well and surely rid of her; she must be burnt, and all the crowd must behold her dead. She must be for ever dishonoured, and her mission with her; her King, who believed in that

mission, the men of valour who fought with her, the soldiers who followed her, and all the party that was her party must be covered with scorn, ignominy, and ridicule. The Armagnacs, in a body, to be the dupes of a witch duly unmasked by the Holy Inquisition ; what a hideous scandal in the eyes of Heaven, and how profitable to the fair fame of the allied powers of England and Burgundy !

Thus the Bishop of Beauvais turned things over in his mind, and came to the decision that his masters' ends and his own would best be served by a trial conducted with a good deal of order, with a show of strict justice tempered with mercy, observing, as far as might be, honoured forms and rules, dressed in a decent garment of pure religion, or of something as nearly resembling it as might be procurable. Nevertheless, the proceedings at Rouen were carried out with one single end in view—Joan's undoing. The court was packed with weak, time-serving or prejudiced men, every sort of covert unfairness was made use of, no scrap of valid evidence was produced against the accused. The letter of the law was kept very cleverly, though not entirely ; its spirit was continuously violated.

Pierre Cauchon, having obtained a concession from the Chapter of Rouen, which enabled him to exercise judicial functions within the confines of its territory (even so the question of his right remains a moot point), associated with himself, as judge, Jean Lemaître, Vice-Inquisitor in the diocese of Rouen, who, as is evident, liked his position very ill, but was fain to do as he was bid. Jean d'Estivet, called *Benedicité*, was appointed to be "Promoter" of the trial, and a large number of assessors were selected, leading lights of the University of Paris, learned ecclesiastics of great fame and distinction, all devoted to the Anglo-Burgundian cause. Amongst them were Jean Lefèvre, Guillaume Enard, Nicolas Midi (a Parisian Doctor of Theology, and Joan's bitter enemy in the trial), Jean Beaupère, Jacques de Touraine, Gerard Feuillet, Nicolas Loysleur,

who went disguised to the Maid in her prison-cell, told her that he came from her own country and so gained her confidence in order to use her words against her. Thomas de Courcelle was another of the assessors. He was young, but already remarkable for his brilliant scholarship. He belonged to a noble family of Picardy, Burgundian in sympathy. In his demeanour he was as meek and modest as a maiden, and with his gentle eyes looking down at the ground he voted for Joan's torture, and later for her death. Manchon and Colles, the two clerks of the Court, whose business it was to take down notes of the trial, and afterwards to elaborate them into an official record, seem to have been troubled by many scruples, concerning which they spoke out at the Trial of Rehabilitation in 1456. During Cauchon's "Fair Trial" (as he called it) they lacked the courage, perhaps they almost lacked the power, to protest. The same is true of other unprejudiced men, unwillingly connected with the affair. One brave and upright man there was in Rouen, Jean Lohier, a lawyer. The scheme of the trial was communicated to him for his opinion, and for three days he studied it, and then spoke frankly. He said that Joan could not be proceeded against in matters of Faith, unless evidence was produced publicly, proving that there was a "common report" against her. The production of such information was a legal necessity. He said further that the trial was not valid for three reasons. In the first place, it was held in a military stronghold, where witnesses were not at liberty to speak freely; secondly, the honour of the King of France was touched in the case, he being thus made a party, was yet unrepresented; and thirdly, the "accusation" had not been given to the Maid, and though she was a minor, simple and ignorant, she had been given no counsel.

Lohier added to Manchon, the clerk: "I believe they will catch her in her words, as for example if she says, 'I know for certain that I touched the apparitions.' If

she said, ‘It seemed to me that I touched them,’ I think no man could condemn her.” For this free expression of his opinions Lohier was forced to fly from the country, and from Cauchon’s avenging wrath.

Nicolas de Houppeville dared to remark that the trial was not valid because the Maid was being judged by a company of her enemies, and also because she had already been tried and approved of at Poitiers, by the Archbishop of Reims, who was Cauchon’s ecclesiastical superior. Nicolas was thrown into prison.

Concerning the “common report” mentioned by Lohier, Cauchon knew of its necessity well enough. He sent an emissary to collect information from Domrémy and the neighbourhood, who duly did his work and returned to the Bishop. But he was sent away with a flea in his ear and no payment for all his trouble ; for, as he says himself, there was nothing in the report that he would not have had said about his own sister. The Bishop, however, gleaned rumours and hearsays and facts that he twisted and represented according to his fantasy, and published a preliminary document stating that there was a *Fama* or common report against Joan for wearing men’s clothes and for many other acts, that she had done, both shameful and heretical.

The trial opened on January 9th, the time from that date until February 1st being occupied with the private deliberations of the judges. The Inquisitorial form of procedure was carefully observed, which form was as follows :—

1. Process ex officio.

Inquiry as to facts of accusation.

Examination of the accused on the results of this inquiry.

Drawing up of the case by the “Promoter.”

2. Process in ordinary.

Trial and examination of the accused (by torture if considered necessary).

Sentence.

In the case of the Maid, the Process *ex officio* began with the suppressed inquiry at Domrémy, included six public and nine private examinations, and was brought to a close by the drawing up of the Seventy Articles of the Act of Accusation on March 26th. Upon the next day, the 27th March 1431, began the trial in ordinary. The Articles were read to Joan, and she was questioned upon them. On May 9th it was suggested that she should be put to the torture. The suggestion was, however, overruled. On May 24th the sentence was read condemning the Maid to perpetual imprisonment.

On the 21st February 1431, Joan of Arc came before her judges, for the first time, in the chapel of the castle of Rouen. There were present forty-two of them besides Cauchon, their chief, so the wolves and the lamb were face to face at last.

The Maid had been a captive for eight months. She had been deprived of sweet light and air and free movement, of friends and lovers, of women associates and of good counsel. She had been abandoned. She had suffered much at the hands of all sorts of people, religious consolation had lately been denied her. She was nineteen years old, quite alone, without a scrap of news of her own people, or a hint of advice as to how to bear herself, from any human person. She saw a pack of learned, powerful men, banded together for the purpose of her undoing and the dishonouring of her King and cause. All round her she beheld the faces of her sworn enemies. She knew that it behoved her to be as wary as she might. She summoned to her aid her instinct, which was sure—her wits, which were keen enough, and such simple lore as she was mistress of. She waited, apprehensive of danger, deeply distrustful, and with good reason.

Cauchon and his chosen ones were confronted with what looked like a pale boy in a page's black suit, somewhat prison-worn—to all appearance a slight, sombre, and

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FACSIMILE OF A PORTION OF THE TRIAL OF JOAN OF ARC
FROM A MINIATURE BY JEAN FOUCET

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harmless apparition. But things are not as they seem, and it is upon record that chaste susceptibilities were violently outraged. That young head, uncovered but for its brown hair cut *en rond* above the ears, roused no feeling of pity, but sentiments of disgust and horror that a woman could dare to go so immodestly, and against all decent custom. It is probable that monks, sitting in the castle chapel, that day beheld a woman's hair for the first time in their lives. The sight shocked them out of measure ; their minds flew to sorceries, deeds of cruelty, fire and blood and violence. They became newly and strongly prejudiced.

The Maid first took the word, and proffered two requests—first, that churchmen of her own party should sit to try her, in equal number with her adversaries ; and secondly, that she might be allowed to hear Mass. Both these demands were brushed aside. She was then seated upon a chair, close to a table at the judges' feet. At this table were placed the clerks, or registrars, whose duty it was to keep the record of the trial. The private clerks of Beaupère and Errard, two of the Assessors, were often with them. Two English clerks also kept their notes, hidden behind a curtain.

The sessions were long and extremely fatiguing, often lasting for three hours on end, or more. Joan was purposely questioned haphazard, her interrogators leaping from one subject to another, and back again in a manner cruelly bewildering. They asked her unfair and excessively intricate questions, which they repeated continually, hoping to take her off her guard, or to surprise her into a contradiction ; time and again they set traps for her tongue. Sometimes they spoke loudly and eagerly and several of them at once, so that the poor Maid became utterly confused, and begged them : “ Fair sirs, speak to me one of you after the other.” Her requests and appeals they systematically ignored, and were so biased in their views

of her conduct that she was driven to despair, and exclaimed piteously: "You put down everything that is against me, and nothing that is for me."

A few of the Assessors were not altogether unfriendly. Their hearts being touched by the desperate plight of a forlorn child, they—notably Brother Duval and Brother Isambard de la Pierre—essayed to help her by a word, or offered her honest counsel. But their interference irritated the Bishop of Beauvais beyond measure, and sometimes gave rise to violent altercations and disputes. The first session of the trial was the only one held in the castle chapel, for the disorder and the clamour were so excessive and unseemly, that it was decided for the sake of privacy to proceed on the following day in the small Ornament Room leading out of the great Hall. And so it was done, two English guards keeping the door.

Between February 24th and 27th the Maid was ill, and unable to leave her prison. A doctor of medicine visited her, accompanied by certain of her judges, who questioned her as she lay in her cell. It is evident that she suspected having been poisoned by a carp that the Bishop of Beauvais had sent her. She expressed her thoughts, and Estivet fell upon her with a torrent of horrible abuse. "You have been eating herrings," he said at last, "and other rubbish."

The Maid was carefully treated, for it was by no means intended that she should die a natural death, so the doctor bled her. It was probably in connexion with this incident that a bystander asked her if she had ever been present when English blood was shed.

"In God's name, yes!" said Joan. "You talk mildly indeed. Why did they not leave France and return to their own land?"

Then an English lord who was there said, "She is a brave girl, and I would that she were English."

Of the aspects of the Maid's trial and of the questions

raised, some have already been discussed at length. Nothing, therefore, need be said concerning Joan's relations with her Visions and Voices wherein was the "head and front of her offending." The mystery of the King's secret and the allegory of the angel and the crown have also been explained, as far as may be. There remain, however, certain other points which the judges of Rouen considered to be of the first importance.

They never tired, for example, of interrogating her upon the subject of her male dress. Again and again they asked her why she wore it, by whose advice she wore it, if she would abandon it, and upon what conditions.

On February 27th Beaupère inquired : "Was it God who prescribed to you the dress of a man ? "

"What concerns this dress is a small thing—it is nothing. I did not take it by the advice of any man in the world. I did not take this dress or do anything but by the command of Our Lord and the angels."

This definite reply did not satisfy, for Beaupère persisted :—

"Did you not take this garment by order of Robert de Baudricourt ? "

"No."

"Do you think it was well to take a man's dress ? "

"All that I have done by order of Our Lord I think has been well done."

"In this particular case, this taking of man's dress, do you think you did well ? "

"I have done nothing but by the order of God."

Later in the trial, they asked again :—

"Was it at the request of Robert de Baudricourt, or of yourself, that you took a man's dress ? "

"It was of myself, and at the request of no living man."

"In taking the dress did you think you were doing wrong ? "

"No. . . ."

And upon another occasion, they offered this alternative :—

"Which would you prefer, to have a woman's dress to hear Mass, or to remain in a man's dress and not to hear it?"

"Give me assurance beforehand that I shall hear Mass if I am in female attire, and I will answer you this."

"Very well, I give you assurance of it. You shall hear Mass if you put on female attire."

"And what say you if I have sworn and promised to our King, my master, not to put off this dress? . . . Have made for me a long dress down to the ground without a train, give it to me to go to Mass, and then on my return I will again put on the dress that I have."

In conclusion of the matter the Maid declared : "For nothing in the world would I swear not to arm myself and put on man's dress. I must obey the orders of my Lord. Only in one event if it should happen that I should be brought to judgment, I beseech the lords of the Church to do me the grace to allow me a woman's smock and a hood for my head. . . ."

"As you say that you wear a man's dress by command of God, why do you ask for a woman's smock at the point of death?"

"It will be enough for me if it be long."

If, in this matter, it appears that the judges were childishly insistent and the Maid tenacious to the point of obstinacy, the strong prejudice of the age must be taken into account in the judges' behalf. As for Joan, she had adopted a boy's dress for very obvious reasons of convenience. In doing so, under the exceptional conditions of her life, she in fact fulfilled those obligations of modesty, the breaking of which her judges so deeply deplored. Besides this, as has been said before, her dress was with the Maid a point of honour. It was the symbol of her mission,

the badge of her office, her soldier's uniform. Thus a mere detail, "a small thing," became magnified through its significance into a matter of life and death.

Another all-important question was that of the Maid's submission to the Church. This portion of the trial is permeated through and through with the poison of a most wicked injustice. Here Pierre Cauchon forged for his own ends a deadly instrument, double-edged and sure. He asked Joan if she would submit the question of the nature of her inspiration to the judgment of the Church—that is to say, to his judgment, and to that of his Anglo-Burgundian associates. If she refused, she would be convicted of contumacy, and might be burnt out of hand. If, on the contrary, she agreed to abide by the decision of the Church, they would say that her inspiration was from the devil, and her alternatives, abjuration or the stake. Cauchon held his captive very close.

Yet there remained a way of escape. It was open to the Maid to appeal to a higher court, to the Pope and the judgment of Rome. But she was all unlearned in ecclesiastical lore, and Cauchon relied upon her ignorance. Nevertheless, this is how the matter fell out. They said : "Will you refer yourself to the decision of the Church ?"

And Joan : "I refer myself to God who sent me, to Our Lady, and to all the Saints in Paradise. And I think it is all one, God and the Church, and one should make no difficulty about it. Why do you make difficulty ?"

"There is a Church Triumphant in which are God, and the saints and the angels and the souls of the saved. There is another Church, the Church Militant, in which are the Pope, the Vicar of God on earth, the Cardinals, Prelates of the Church, the Clergy, and all good Christians and Catholics. This Church regularly assembled cannot err, being ruled of the Holy Spirit. Will you refer yourself to this Church which we have thus just defined to you ?"

"I came to the King of France from God, from the

Blessed Virgin Mary, from all the Saints of Paradise and the Church Victorious above, and by their command. To this Church I submit all my good deeds, all that I have done or will do. . . .”

Greatly daring, they asked her if she would not speak freely to the Pope and refer to him on matters of the Faith and her conscience.

“Indeed,” she answered, “I summon you to take me to him, and I will answer before him as is meet.”

Here the Maid made her appeal, speaking validly and within her rights, and her appeal was passed by unanswered.

To this incident may be added the testimony of Brother Isambard de la Pierre, a Dominican friar who was friendly to the Maid: “On one occasion, I and others admonished and besought Joan to submit to the Church. To which she replied that she would willingly submit to the Holy Father, requesting to be taken before him, and to be no more submitted to the judgment of her enemies. And when at this time I counselled her to submit to the Council of Bâle, Joan asked what a General Council was. I answered her that it was an assembly of the whole Church Universal and of Christendom, and that in this Council there were some of her side as well as of the English side. Having heard and understood this, she began to cry: ‘Oh, if in that place there are any of our side, I am quite willing to give myself up and submit myself to the Council of Bâle.’ And immediately, in great rage and indignation, the Bishop of Beauvais began to call out, ‘Hold your tongue, in the devil’s name!’ And he told the notary he was to be careful to make no note of the submission she had made to the General Council of Bâle. On account of these things and many others the English and their officers threatened me terribly, so that had I not kept silence they would have thrown me into the Seine.”

Thus things went very well for the Bishop and for his trial. By the middle of March, the trial *ex officio* was

brought to a close, and Estivet, the Promoter, drew up a document consisting of seventy articles, the Act of Accusation against the Maid. The Articles were read aloud to Joan on March 28th by Thomas de Courcelles. After due interrogation and deliberation they were reduced to the number of twelve.

At this point Cauchon offered the Maid counsel. It was an empty boon. Whom there might she take, or trust for her counsel? Loyseleur, who had cheated her into confidence, giving out that he had come from the Marches of Lorraine? Thomas de Courcelles, modest as a maid, who voted for her torture? Isambard de la Pierre, who was afraid to speak his mind? She thanked the Bishop, and said: "I do not wish to depart from the counsel of my God."

The twelve Articles, as soon as they were ready, were sent to various learned doctors for their opinions. Notably, they were sent to the University of Paris, for Cauchon knew right well that the sanction of that great institution would lend prestige and weight to the proceedings at Rouen. He desired to impart to them an appearance of order and excellent justice.

The Articles were drawn up, it is said, by Maître Nicolas Midi. They are certainly composed with diabolical skill. There is not set down a single accusation against the Maid which has not its foundation in fact, and is therefore extremely difficult to disprove. Nevertheless, the impression produced (with deep intent) is not in the least in accordance with the truth. The Articles form a tissue of misrepresentation and insinuation. They are full of omissions and additions. They are specious, plausible, false in their significance.

Article I. connects the Maid's inspiration with superstitions concerning the fairy-tree at Domrémy, with magic and sorcery in general. It dwells upon her lack of duty to her parents, and draws attention to her life amongst

“a great troop of soldiers” with whom she lived night and day, having never had, or at least very rarely, another woman with her.

Article II. finds fault with the account she gave concerning the sign given to the King of France.

Articles III. and IV. deal contemptuously with the Maid’s belief in her saints and her gift of prophecy.

Article V. pounces upon the fact of her male dress. “She doth say that it is necessary that she should have a short tunic, cap, jerkin, breeches, hose with many points, hair cut close above her ears, keeping no garment which might indicate her sex.”

Article VI. condemns her use of the words *Jhesus Maria* with which she headed her correspondence.

Article VII. represents, as supreme arrogance, the Maid’s belief in her mission, and outlines her course of action with regard to de Baudricourt and the Dauphin.

Article VIII. paints in the darkest colours the attempt to escape from Beaurevoir.

Article IX. declares that the Maid believes herself as certain of heaven as if she were already in the glory of the blessed; that she believes she has not committed mortal sin.

Article X., which seems excessively foolish to modern minds, complains that Joan says her saints do not speak English because they are not on the English side. (Though this is so ridiculously expressed it does contain the germ of a real religious difficulty.)

Article XI. blames the Maid for not asking the advice of a priest upon the subject of her revelations.

Article XII. deplores the fact that she will not submit to the Church.

Here was wherewithal to burn twenty heretics such as Joan. The tribunal at Rouen knew it, the University of Paris recognized it, and after solemn deliberation sent back word to that effect. The trial was practically at its

end, the nature of which had never been doubtful. Yet Cauchon was in no hurry. Not a movement of impatience or unseemly haste should mar the severe beauty of his work of art, his "Beau Process." The heretic must be still interrogated, visited, charitably admonished.

Whilst the Twelve Articles were yet in the hands of the learned and Christian doctors of Paris, the poor heretic, by this quite outworn in body and in mind, fell sick of a fever, as was small wonder, and languished in her prison. To her came the religious and pitiful Cauchon, and spoke comfortable words concerning the errors of her soul.

Joan answered him : "I thank you for what you say to me for my salvation. It seems to me, seeing how ill I am, that I am in great danger of death. If it be that God should do His pleasure on me I ask of you that I may have confession and my Saviour also, and that I may be put in holy ground."

"To gain these things you must first submit to the Church."

"I have nothing more to say to you," said the sick child whom they tortured.

She had not the luck to die of her fever, but rose from her bed to be haled before the judges once again. They were marking time till the answer should come from Paris. They showed her the torture-chamber with the rack prepared and the executioners standing ready, but she refused to say anything further to her judges. "Indeed, indeed," she cried, "if you should tear me limb from limb till my soul left my body, I will say nothing but what I have now said, and if I do say anything else I will declare that you made me say it by force. . . . Last night I had comfort from St. Gabriel."

Fourteen Assessors were consulted as to whether Joan should be tortured. Two were in favour of it—Aubert Morel, and the modest young Thomas de Courcelles. Loyseleur considered that it might be a salutary medicine for

her soul ; nevertheless, he set his mark with the "Noes." The Maid was spared this last cruelty.

Now the messengers returned from Paris with the news that the entire University was unanimous in its opinion of Joan, having been instructed by the Twelve Articles. They knew and were sure that her Visions and Voices were inventions of the Evil One, and that she herself was a traitor, an idolater, a heretic, a schismatic, and worse.

These things were explained to the Maid, and she was exhorted and admonished to repent, this time by Pierre Maurice,¹ and not at all unkindly, the Canons of Rouen were never whole-hearted in their proceedings against her. After speaking simply, seriously, and at some length, he said : "And now I admonish, I beseech, I exhort you, in the name of your devotion to the Passion of your Creator, and of the affection you should bear to the salvation of your body and soul, I admonish, I beseech you, amend yourself, return into the way of truth, obey the Church, submit to her judgment and decision.

"In acting thus, you will save your soul ; you will redeem, so I believe, your body from death. But if you do not, if you persist, know that your soul shall be overwhelmed by damnation, and I fear for the destruction of your body.

"May Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, preserve you from all these evils."

But Joan answered : "What I have always said and held in the trial I wish still to say and maintain. If I were condemned, if I saw the fire lighted, the faggots prepared, and the executioner ready to kindle the fire, and if I myself were in the fire, I would not say otherwise, and would maintain to the death all I have said."

Against this passage, in the Minute of the trial, Manchon, the Registrar, has written : "*Responsia Johanna superba*,"

After this, the judges declared the process to be con-

¹ Canon of the church of Rouen.

cluded, and having summoned Joan to hear her sentence read upon the morrow, they sent her back to her prison.

Here it is to be believed that she passed such a night as no man could wish for his worst enemy. William Talbot, John Gray, and the rest of her English guards, waking or sleeping, were close beside her through its weary hours. To her, tired out as she was, there came but little rest. Chained to her wretched bed, she lay with irons on her feet, breathing quickly the dank, stale prison air, her eyes open in the fearsome prison darkness. Thoughts, disturbing and terrifying, flew ceaselessly and confusedly through her mind ; the waters of despair rose surely to close over her soul. Her Voices had promised her deliverance, and she had hoped for a triumphant rescue by her friends, the knights and the King she loved so well. But hope deferred had made her heart sick. "How long ?" she cried in spirit. "How long ?" Her judges had told her that her saints were unworthy of credence. She began to be horribly afraid. Where was the fair chivalry of France ? Where was Charles, the gentle Dauphin ? Where were Dunois, La Hire, Xaintrailles, Florent d' Illiers ? Where was the brave Duke of Alençon ? Pass, pass, fearful hours of night ; salvation must come with the dawn, the blessed light, the welcome sound of horses' hoofs and armed men marching, the Voices of the dear saints. . . . But stay, what if morning should bring none of these, only more hard questions, the eager faces of Cauchon and his wolves, torture maybe, the rack, or—the fire ? All her being shuddered and shrank ! There was no salvation ; she must die the death, and she knew it. She had believed herself to be the "Daughter of God." It was a mistake. She called wildly upon her saints, but got no comfort—only silence, and darkness, and horror to come.

Alack, for the sweet water meadows of the Meuse, and the tender lambs at Domrémy !

When morning came, Joan was taken in a cart to the

cemetery of the church of St. Ouen, where her sentence was to be read, preceded by a sermon for the edification of the people. Two stages, or platforms, had been set up ; one was spacious and accommodated a crowd of bishops and abbots and ecclesiastics of high degree, the Maid's judges, the Assessors, all the personnel of the trial ; besides these, many great ones of the English party, the Cardinal of Winchester and the Bishop of Norwich among them. The other stage Messire Guillaume Errard had for his pulpit. He preached long and eloquently, taking his text from the word of St. John, the beloved Apostle : "A branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine." The Maid stood beside the preacher on his platform. All round there was a vast crowd collected. Towards the end of his discourse he turned to his victim and cried :

"I speak to you, Joan, and I tell you that your King is heretic and schismatic."

Hitherto the Maid had listened in perfect silence, but she could not brook this insult to the Lilies of France.

"By my faith, my lord," she said, "saving your reverence, I do dare to say and to swear, at the risk of my life, that he is the noblest of all Christians, loving the Faith and the Church more than man alive."

Thus she guarded the honour of the reprobate who had deserted her.

The sermon ended, Joan was admonished to submit, to recant, to repent, to amend her ways.

"I refer me to God," she said, "and to our Holy Father the Pope."

But they passed by her appeal, saying that the Pope was too far away, and as she would say no more the Bishop of Beauvais was fain to begin the reading of her sentence. Now he did this with extreme deliberation, for he had it in his mind to add one delicate touch for the perfecting of that triumphant work of art, the Maid's trial.

The thing was very well as it was. The English were

perfectly satisfied. They wanted the sentence and then the judgment, quickly. They did not understand Cauchon's subtlety, and were irritated by his delay. But the Bishop was an epicure. What if the Maid could be prevailed upon to recant? What if she herself should give the lie to all that she had previously averred in matters of faith and revelation? What if she herself could be made to confess herself an impostor, a heretic, and a witch? Cauchon foresaw a truly poetic consummation to his labours, and one that made for perfect security. If Joan recanted of her own free will, he argued, who could call in question the methods of the court that had tried her? Protesting mouths would be stopped. But one inconvenient detail was contingent. The recantation must necessarily be followed by the remission of the death-sentence. Well, that could be got over. "In the Name of the Lord, Amen," said the Bishop; and began a somewhat lengthy preamble to the sentence of condemnation. The clerks that stood about the Maid pressed her constantly to abjure while there was time. "Save your body and your soul," they said. "Die not, but live," they said; and they promised that she should be taken to a decent church prison, and should have the companionship of women and all the consolations of religion. "Sign," they urged—"sign." Near by, the executioner waited with his cart to carry the victim to instant burning. "Abjure," said all the clerks together. "Joan, Joan, save yourself."

"Thou hast been . . . seditious, cruel, apostate, schismatic, believing a thousand errors against our faith, horribly guilty towards God and towards Holy Church. . . ." One by one, with many an impressive pause, Cauchon dropped the words of the sentence, but at this place the Maid cried out with a loud voice that she would submit herself in all things to the Church's judgment.

The Bishop stayed his reading, and immediately there began to be an uproar among the English crowd, who

thought to see their prey escape from under their very eyes. The people complained loudly, they threw stones, they accused Cauchon and his colleagues, God knows how unjustly, of favouritism towards the Maid. In the midst of the growing noise and confusion, Errard unfolded and read the schedule of the abjuration. Persons who were there present have recorded that it was a short document, not longer than a *Pater Noster*, and consisted of six or seven lines of large writing. It was written in French and began : "I, Joan. . . ." In it the Maid submitted herself to the judgment of the Church, confessed to having been a traitor, and to having misled the people. She promised to bear arms no longer, neither to wear man's dress, nor her hair cut *en rond*. The Maid, having heard the schedule read, complained piteously that she did not understand it, and she called upon St. Michael to help her. She was in a great strait, for she wished to gain time, and she was afraid of the fire (Heaven pity her!). Nevertheless, she longed to keep faith and loyalty.

Errard said to Massieu who stood by her, "Make her abjure," or some such words, and gave him the document. Massieu, as in duty bound, warned the Maid that she stood in very great danger of the fire. He advised her to submit the question (whether she would sign, or no) to the *Universal Church*, and she spoke out to this effect, but Errard answered sharply that she should confer no longer with Massieu or have further counsel.

"Sign now," he said, "or you shall be burnt to-day."

At this she yielded.

She spoke the words of the abjuration after Massieu, and at the foot of the document made a cross for her mark with a pen that Massieu gave her, and her hand being guided wrote her name thus : "Jehanne."

She said : "My deeds I have done by God's order. I charge no one with them, neither my King nor any one else. If there be any fault found in them the blame is on

me, and no one else." Thus her nobility shone out even in the moment of her greatest weakness.

It is a curious fact, recorded by more than one witness, that as she repeated the words of the abjuration Joan smiled. About this small detail there is something mysterious and horrible.

When she had ceased to speak and had signed her name, the Bishop read the mitigated sentence which he had by him, and condemned the Maid to imprisonment for life "with the bread of sorrow and the water of affliction, in order that thou mayest bewail thy faults and that thou mayest no more commit acts which thou shalt have to bewail hereafter."

Loyseleur said to the Maid : " You have done a good day's work, please God, and saved your soul." But she never answered him, and begged to be taken out of English soldiers' hands to a prison with women about her. At this Cauchon gave an order : " Take her back to the same prison from whence you brought her." And so it was done. The tumult was raging all the while and the air was full of impatient outcry.

A woman's dress was sent to Joan by the Duchess of Bedford. A certain tailor brought it and put it on her ; as he did this he touched her urgently on the bosom. She was very angry, and struck him. Her brown hair, cut *en rond*, was modestly hidden, and in this guise Courcelles, Loyseleur, Nicolas Midi, and other clerks were doubtless pleased to find her when they visited her on the afternoon of May the 24th.

Of what passed during the three following days there is no exact record. There are not many who would have the heart to wish this silence broken. It hides the bitterest suffering, the unspeakable anguish and despair, of one who was a child in innocence, almost a child in years, forsaken and forlorn.

On Monday, May 28th, the day following Trinity Sunday,

the news was rife from end to end of Rouen that Joan had relapsed, returning to all the evils and heresies that she had so lately abjured. A company of her judges made great speed to go to the prison. "And because Joan was dressed in the dress of a man—that is to say, a short mantle, a hood, a doublet, and other effects used by men—although by our orders she had several days before consented to give up these garments, we asked her when and for what reason she had resumed this dress.

" She answered us : ' I have but now resumed the dress of a man and put off the woman's dress.'

" ' Why did you take it, and who made you take it ? '

" ' I took it of my own free will, and of no constraint. I prefer a man's dress to a woman's dress.'

" ' You promised and swore not to resume a man's dress.'

" ' I never meant to swear that I would not resume it.'

" ' Why have you resumed it ? '

" ' Because it is more lawful and suitable for me to resume it and to wear man's dress, being with men, than to have a woman's dress. I have resumed it because the promise made to me has not been kept ; that is to say, that I should go to Mass and should receive my Saviour, and that I should be taken out of irons.'

" ' Did you not abjure and promise not to resume this dress ? '

" ' I would rather die than be in irons. But if I am allowed to go to Mass and am taken out of irons and put into a gracious prison, and may have a woman for companion, I will be good and do as the Church wills.' "

Thus spoke the Maid to her judges, according to the official record of the trial of condemnation, but there are other versions of the reasons which caused her to resume the forbidden dress. These versions are given in the evidence taken at the Trial of Rehabilitation, and purport to have come from Joan herself. Brother Isambard de la Pierre and Brother Martin Ladvenu have their story, which

is a dark and terrible one. Master Jean Massieu gives his description as follows :—

" The man's dress was put in a bag in the same room where she was kept prisoner, while she remained guarded in this place in the hands of five of the English, three of whom stayed all night in the room, and two outside the door of the room. I know of a surety that at night she slept, chained by the legs, with two pairs of iron chains, and fastened closely to a chain going across the foot of her bed, held to a great piece of wood five or six feet long, and closed with a key so that she could not move from her place. When the following Sunday came, being Trinity Sunday, and when it was time to rise, as she reported and said to me, she asked the English guards : ' Take off my irons that I may get up.' Then one of the English took away from her the woman's garment which she had on her, and they emptied the bag in which was the man's dress and threw the said dress at her, saying, ' Get up,' and put the woman's dress in the bag. And in accordance with what he said she dressed herself in the man's dress they had given her, saying, ' Sirs, you know it is forbidden me without fail ; I may not take it again.' Nevertheless, they would not give her the other, insomuch that the contention lasted till midday, and, finally, she was compelled to take the said dress. Afterwards they would not give up the other whatever supplications or prayers she might make."

Joan, brave and unfortunate, had her gallant spirit crushed at last. She was utterly broken down. A friar, one of the humaner sort, beheld her " weeping, her face covered with tears, disfigured and outraged, so that I was full of pity and compassion."

This crying girl must yet be put to the question. The judges asked :—

" Since last Thursday (the day of the abjuration) have you heard your Voices ? "

"Yes, I have heard them all."

"What did they say to you?"

"They said to me, God had sent me word by St. Catherine and St. Margaret of the great pity it is this treason to which I have consented, to abjure and recant in order to save my life! I have damned myself to save my life! . . . If I said that God had not sent me I should damn myself, for it is true that God has sent me. My Voices have said to me since Thursday, 'Thou hast done a great evil in declaring that what thou hast done was wrong.' All I said and revoked I said for fear of the fire."

The Maid's meaning was not ambiguous. Her courage is a marvel for all time. Against the record of these her words the Registrar wrote : "*Responsio mortifera.*" And indeed the thing was finished at last. The bitter farce, long drawn out, with an end which had never been doubtful, was come to a close. Even the Bishop of Beauvais could devise no further ornament. He left the castle and met Warwick, who waited without. "Farewell," said Cauchon to him ; "be of good cheer, it is done."

CHAPTER XII

THE LAST ACT

A MANDATE was issued, citing Joan to appear on Wednesday, May 30th, "at the place called the Old Market, in order to be sentenced, excommunicated, and delivered up by Mother Church to the Secular Arm, for justice."

Upon that day Brother Jean Toutmouillé and Brother Martin Ladvenu, of the order of St. Dominic, went to her very early in the morning to hear her in confession, and to tell her what manner of death she must die. And when Joan knew that her hour was at hand, and that she must die by the fire, a great horror fell upon her, and she tore her hair as one that is distraught, and cried out, in dreadful agony: "Alas! Am I to be so horribly and cruelly treated? Alas, that my body which is whole and entire and uncorrupted should to-day be consumed and burnt to ashes. Ah! I would far rather have my head cut off seven times than be thus burned!" At this time nobody could look upon her and feel no pity. Then entered to her Cauchon, and she shrank from him, shuddering and saying: "Bishop, I die through you."

And he said: "Ah, Joan, have patience. You die because you have not kept to what you promised us, and for having returned to your first evil doing."

And the poor Maid answered him: "If you had kept me in a good prison with fit companions this would not have happened; for this I summon you before God."

Whilst they spoke, Brother Toutmouillé, who tells the tale, was overcome with pity, and went out and heard no more.

When Brother Martin Ladvenu had heard the Maid in confession, he demanded the administration of the sacrament upon her behalf. Cauchon consented.

The Lord's Body was borne to the prison, irreverently, without stole or light, surplice or procession, but upon a paten wrapped about with a cloth. Thereat Martin Ladvenu was outraged and sent instantly for a stole and for candles, that things might be done decently, and in order.

The Maid heard Mass very devoutly and with many tears. God send she was comforted. Master Pierre Maurice came to her, to whom she said : " Ah, Master Pierre, where shall I be this night ? "

" Have you not good hope in God ? " he asked her.

" Indeed, yes," she said. " God willing, I shall be in Paradise."

Then they shaved away her hair, and set a mitre upon her head with the words, "*Relapsed Heretic, Apostate, Idolater,*" blazoned upon it, and they dressed her in a woman's dress, such as was usual. And about nine o'clock they took her while she wept and prayed, and put her in a cart and brought her with a strong guard of English soldiers to the Old Market Place of Rouen.

Here there were prepared platforms as upon a former occasion. On one the Maid stood patiently to hear yet another sermon. Another platform was reserved for the lords and clerics, spectators. All round stood English men-at-arms, and beyond them pressed the curious crowd. People hung out of windows to see, and the neighbouring roofs were covered.

After Master Nicolas Midi had improved the occasion, and brought his sermon to a close, my Lord of Beauvais pronounced sentence on the Maid, excommunicating her and abandoning her to the Secular Arm, praying that power to deal gently with her.

Now all formalities were dispensed with. The Bailly of

Rouen, Messire Le Bouteiller, into whose jurisdiction Joan fell, merely motioned with his hand, and said, "Take her away." Two officers lifted her from her platform and brought her to the stake, which was in the centre of the market square.

"Rouen, Rouen," she murmured; "I fear thou wilt suffer for my death."

Then she fell on her knees and prayed with such patience and gentleness that many of those that stood by were touched to tears. She asked her judges to pardon her if she had done them any harm, as also she did of all persons both far and near, even of the English people, and of Henry their little King. At last she said, "Whatever I have done, good or evil, my King did not induce me to do it." Even her judges could not remain unaffected by her demeanour. Had human eyes ever gazed upon a more piteous sight? According to custom they took their departure before the final moment. One of them said doubtfully, "I would that my soul was where I believe the soul of this woman to be." Master Pierre Maurice, who was somewhat soft-hearted, turned away with his eyes full of tears.

Now they bound Joan to the stake, which was very high, being raised upon an edifice of plaster. The executioner complained of this, for he said it was not easy to hasten matters or to make her death merciful. At the last moment before the fire was lighted, Brother Martin Ladvenu and Isambard de la Pierre and Massieu were close beside her, comforting her. She asked for a cross to hold. So an Englishman broke a stick and tied the pieces together for a little cross and gave it her. She received it very thankfully for the sake of God her Redeemer, who had suffered on the Cross for her Redemption, and put it in her bosom beneath her dress. And when they had brought the great cross from the church of St. Sauveur hard by, and held it high so that she might see it, she bade

the Brothers of St. Dominic and Massieu to go down that they might receive no hurt from the fire.

She commended herself to St. Michael and to all her dear saints, and as the red flames rose she called upon her Redeemer's name. The thick smoke hid her from sight, but she called in a clear voice, "*Jesus!*" And after she had so called five or six times, she died.

Fear came upon many who were there because of the manner of her death. Some said that through all the raging of the fire her heart was not consumed. That night there was disquiet in Rouen. The executioner fled in a panic to the Dominican friars in their convent, "moved with a marvellous repentance and terrible contrition, quite desperate and fearing never to obtain pardon and indulgence from God for what he had done to this holy woman."

A citizen returned to his home in trouble and distress, groaning and saying, "We are all lost; we have burned a saint."

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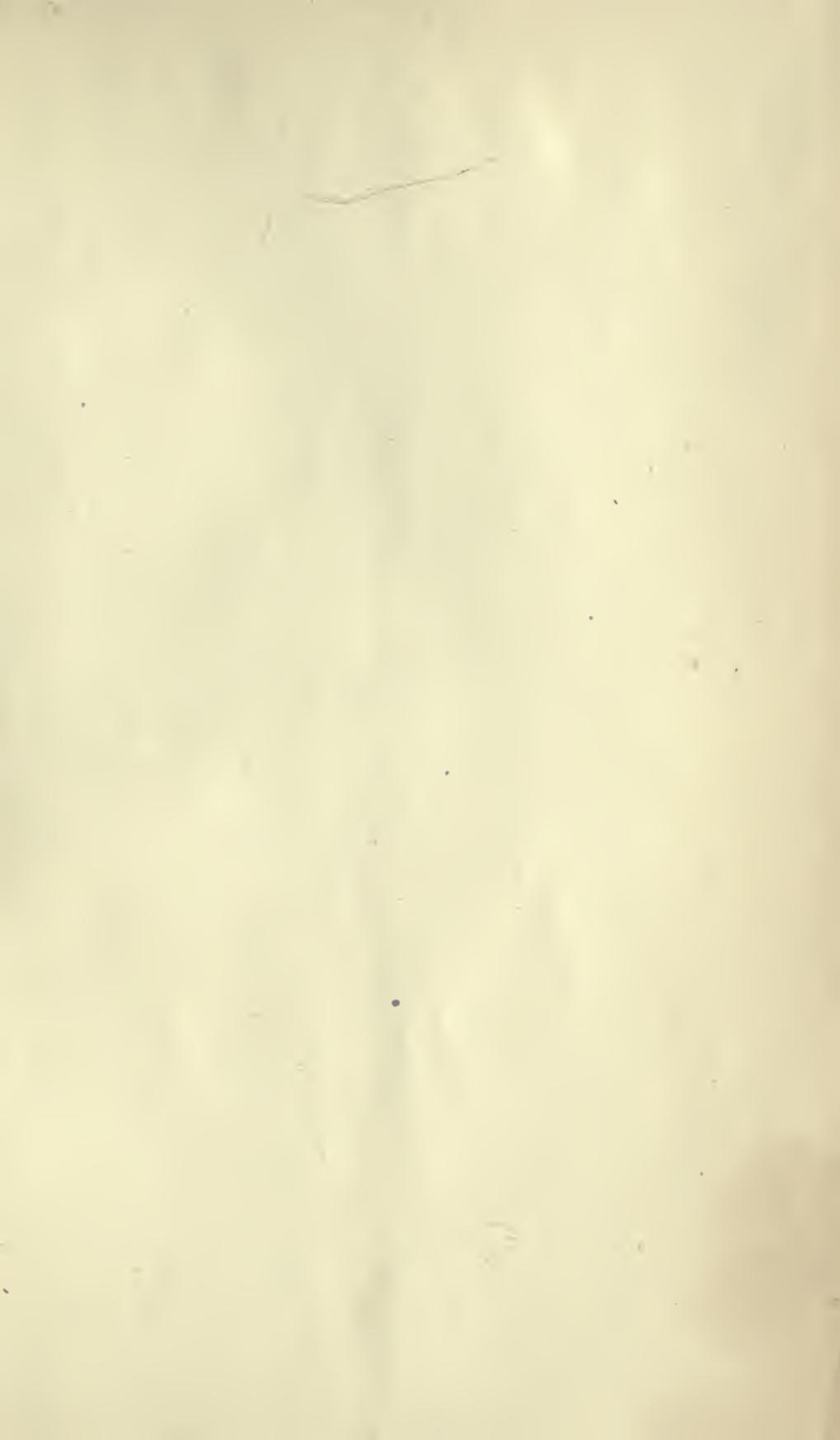
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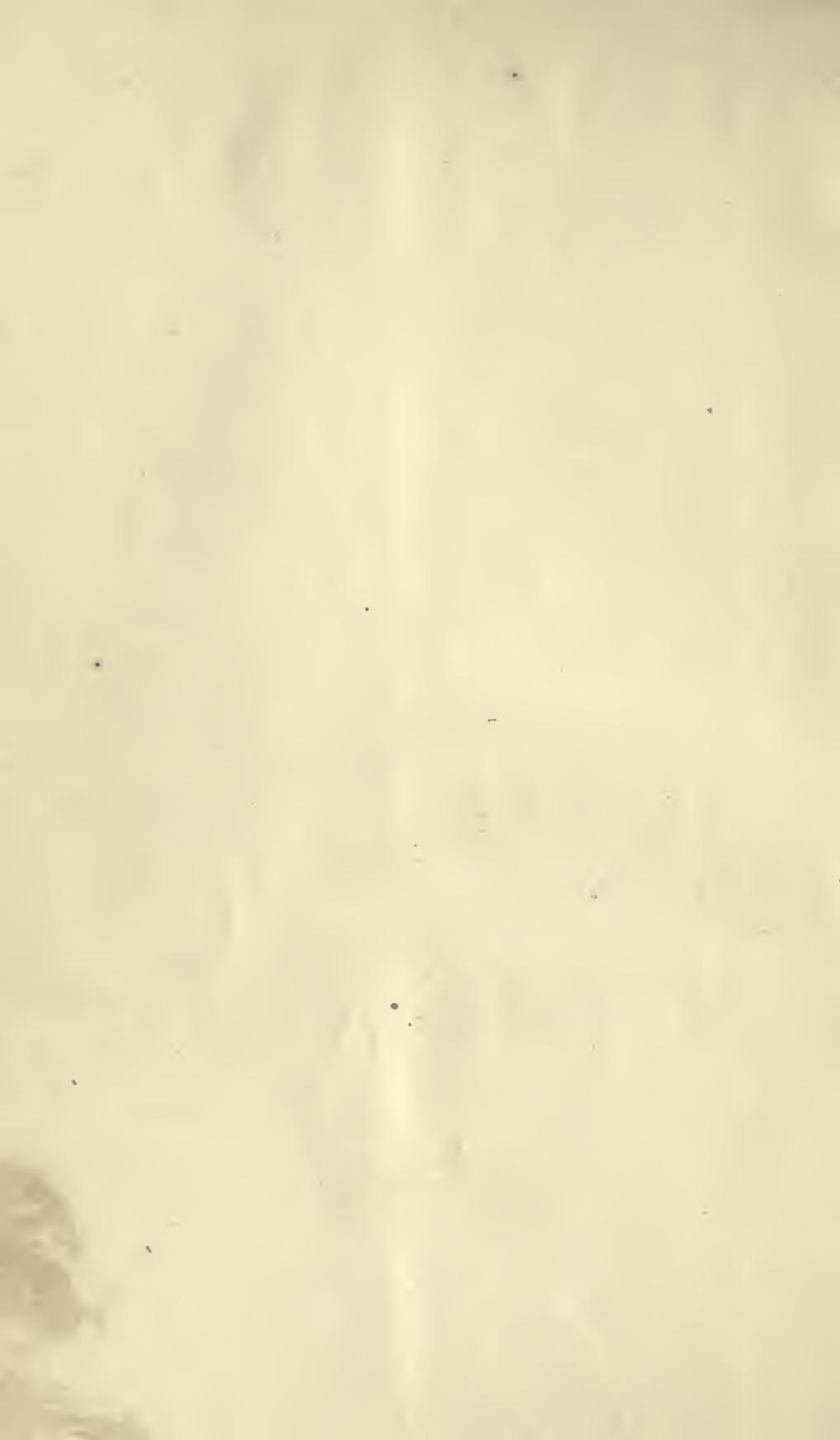
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